

GAZETTE DES BEAUX-ARTS

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C O N T E N T S

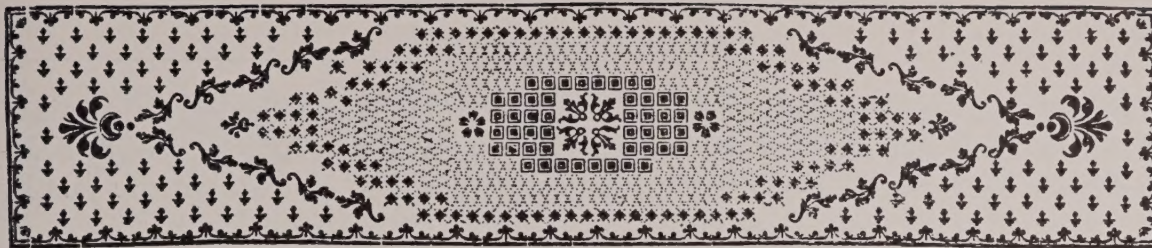
THE COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS OF FRANCIS I, BY JEAN ADHEMAR.
¶ CHARLES POERSON, 1609-1667, AND THE TAPESTRIES OF THE LIFE OF
THE VIRGIN IN THE STRASBOURG CATHEDRAL, BY JEANNE LEJEUX.
¶ PORTRAITS BY RIGAUD IN THE SLAVIC COUNTRIES, BY BORIS LOSSKY.
¶ THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN ART: DAVID AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF GERICAULT'S ART. ¶ BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF ART COLLECTIONS

THE COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS OF FRANCIS I

FRANCIS I was one of the first Kings of France to gather a collection of paintings solely for his own gratification and pleasure. To be sure, Charles V already owned paintings, but they were mostly religious, mixed with a large number of heterogeneous works, and some jewels the commercial value of which may have represented their main attraction. Louis XIII and Anne de Bretagne possessed a certain number of Italian works, such as some works by

Leonard and some portraits of Florentine princes, but with these were also mixed some automats and such curiosities as a Hercules with moving eyes.¹ With Francis I, the very character of the royal collection changes, and the artistic quality of the work of art seems to get precedence over all other considerations.²

Today we find this royal collection dispersed, and at first glance it would seem difficult to reconstruct it. Some works are at the Louvre. A great number of them have disappeared, some of which we might expect to rediscover in the provincial collections under whimsical attributions. Official texts are missing. There is no known contemporary inventory. The *Actes* of Francis I do not deal with any important painting. The account books which have been preserved until now, are silent, but the remaining part of these accounts does not start until 1520, and is most fragmentary. Laborde and Montaignon have found several loose pages of these account books in some old bindings of the *Journal des Débats* collection and in cannon cartridges in the arsenals.

One must therefore have recourse to an old XVII Century manuscript inventory of Fontainebleau found by Herbet, to literary sources, and to stories of the lives of the painters of the time, especially the *Vite* by Vasari, which on this subject have not been much explored. The present reconstruction of the collection will not be complete, but it will in any case be far more extensive than the one which Dimier attempted to give.³

* * *

King Francis I seems to have gathered the nucleus of his collection shortly after his advent to the throne, in 1517-1518, even before he settled down at Fontainebleau. He found, first of all, some good pictures in the royal castles, namely the *Vierge aux Rochers* by Leonard, bought by Louis XII about 1500. And it is again to Leonard that he addresses himself in his efforts to acquire new works of art; he calls him to Paris at the end of 1516⁴ and Leonard brings with him several of his masterpieces: the *Joconde*, the *St. John the Baptist*, and *St. Anne*. But Leonard will not be able to produce anything else because, with his right hand paralyzed, he was at the time no longer able to paint, but could only draw and guide his pupils.

1. See, particularly LEROUX DE LINCY, *Anne de Bretagne*, III, p. 210 et sq. Louis XII was very much interested in Leonard; see: OSWALD SIREN, *Leonard*, p. 180 et sq. Would the Perugin (?) of the Museum of Caen, France, which comes from Fontainebleau and the Louvre, be an acquisition of Louis XII?

2. It would be interesting to study, as a parallel to this survey of the royal collection, the collections of the noblemen of the Court: those of d'Artus Gouffier, of Florimond Robertet (who owned the *Vierge au Devoir* by Leonard, see: the "Burlington Magazine," 1926, II, pp. 61-68), of Montmorency, of J. Hurault, bishop of Autun, of the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Cardinal of Tournon and also some foreign prelates in France (as Cardinal of Ferrara), Italians and foreign prelates.

3. *French painting* . . . , p. 17; see also: F. HERBET, *Le Château de Fontainebleau*, 1938, pp. 149 et sq. (the inventories remain unpublished); S. DE RICCI, *Description des Peintures du Louvre*, I, 1913; L. HAUTECOEUR, *Histoire des Collections de Peinture du Louvre*, I. The few works that we reproduce here are not the best or the best known, but the ones which it is most difficult to find reproduced.

4. E. SOLMI, *Documenti . . . sulla Dimora di Lionardo in Francia* . . . , in: "Arch. Stor. Lomb.," 1904, II, p. 389.

About 1520, after the death of the master, the King took over these three masterpieces which are today in the Louvre. Had Leonard sold the *Joconde* to him while he was still alive for 4,000 écus? Anyway, so tradition has it, and it may be true, since Leonard, even though a stranger, was allowed until his death to dispose of his property, and none of it came into the possession of the Crown by the so-called right of "*aubaine*" (escheatage). On the other hand, the nude *Jocondes*, which were quite numerous and exerted a great influence on French painting, were certainly done by pupils of Leonard for French amateurs,⁵ and it is not impossible that the King would have owned one of them. But Melzi left France in 1519, very quickly after the death of his teacher, leaving the way clear for other artists.

Raphael, urged by Francis I to establish himself in Paris, refused these flattering openings. He does not seem to have sold any works directly to the King, with perhaps the exception of the *St. Margaret* executed, according to all likelihood, for the sister of the King, Marguerite de Navarre, and which arrived at Fontainebleau before 1540. The other Raphael paintings in the royal collections come from Italian amateurs who sent them to France: the large *St. Family* and the *St. Michel fighting the Dragon*, of the Louvre, were painted in March and April of 1518 at the expense of the Pope, Leon X, and were offered by Lorenzo dei Medici to his aunt, the Queen of France. The *Portrait of Jeanne d'Aragon*, painted for Cardinal Bibiena in 1518, was most likely given to Francis I by this prelate, while he was legatee in France.⁶ The *Belle Jardinière*, the *Raphael with his Fencing-Master* (?) were also at Fontainebleau.⁷

It is known that Andrea del Sarto came to France in 1517. The King had him come after having acquired two of his paintings: a *Christ carried by Angels* (1516) and a *Madonna*, sold to Francis I by dealers for a price which was four times higher than the sum received by the artist. Vasari, to whom we owe this information, assures us that the King estimated these paintings as being "superior to all those which had been sent to him from Rome, Venice and Lombardy." To these should be added the *Madonna* and the *St. Family*, of the Louvre, and the *Christ aux Anges*, which has been lost and which is known only through a bad engraving by Augustin the Venetian (Fig. 1). Laborde made the astute remark that the King must have been intrigued by the design of the work which borrowed

5. See: A. DE HEVESY, in: "Gazette des Beaux-Arts," 1931, I, p. 114. There was also in Fontainebleau a *Rape of Proserpina* attributed to Leonard (a first draft, rediscovered by SALOMON REINACH, was published by him in the "Art Journal," 1921, p. 6); BAILLY ranged it among the unknown (B. 798°).

6. In 1536-1540, Primaticcio washed and cleaned the polish of four works of Raphael: the *St. Margaret*, *St. Michel*, *Jeanne d'Aragon* and *St. Anne* (the latter was the one by Leonard); see LABORDE, in: "Renaissance," I, p. 33. The *St. Michel* was engraved in the XVI Century by Beatrizet.

7. In addition, there was at Fontainebleau a *Portrait of the Cardinal dei Medici*, the future Clement VII; FATHER DAN gave it to Sebastiano de Piombo; an inventory of 1692 and the inventory by BAILLY to Raphael; this portrait has been lost, but there is a copy of it at Versailles (School of Titian?).

some of its greatness from Michelangelo, as well as by its bright color and especially its gracefulness.

In France, Andrea del Sarto painted the *Charity* of the Louvre,⁸ the *Portrait of the Dauphin* at the age of several months (disappeared) and a *St. Jerome repenting*, intended for the Queen Mother. Andrea del Sarto, well received, fondled and generously pensioned by the King, must have executed other works with the collaboration of his pupils. But it is known that he left suddenly, and soon after went to Italy where he spent on himself the money which Francis I had given him for the acquisition of sculptures and paintings for the royal collections. In his attempts to reenter into the grace of the monarch, he did several paintings in Florence intending them for the King. At least two of these remained in Italy. Among these paintings was a half nude *St. John the Baptist*. Perhaps this was the *Bacchus*, of the Louvre, formerly attributed to Leonard, and which until the end of the XVII Century remained as a *St. John the Baptist*, since it was only under the reign of Louis XIV that his cross was taken away and that he received a crown of vine-leaves, which changed his original type. This hypothesis which we advance is strengthened by the fact that there exists, in the Hulin de Loo Collection, an Italian-style work rather poorly inspired by the *Pseudo-Bacchus: a Saint John the Baptist*, whose head is that of the King.⁹ The *Pseudo-Bacchus* must then have been known in France to have been copied in this way.

Another man was mixed into the efforts of Andrea del Sarto to be forgiven by Francis I — he was J. B. della Palla, buyer for the King of France, who, according to Vasari, "was looting Florence" for the King's benefit. It was thanks to della Palla that the *Annunciation* by Fra Bartholomeo, of the Louvre, painted in 1515, came to France, as well as a *St. Sebastian* by the same artist, since lost, which must have been a work full of charm and sensuality, judging from the fact that it was removed from the church where it was first placed, because it was perhaps too much enjoyed by the devotees.¹⁰

Through the intermediary of an Ambassador, Francis I bought from Sebastiano del Piombo, in Rome, in 1521, the *Visitation* of the Louvre, and then a *St. Michel fighting the Dragon*. He also owned the Bronzino painting, the *Venus et l'Amour*, of the National Gallery, London, the *Appearance of Christ to Madeleine* by Albertinelli, and the *Belle Ferronnière*, formerly attributed to Leonard.¹¹

8. In 1518. An engraving (of which prints are very rare) of this painting, by Jean Vaquet (1544), has been mentioned by MARIETTE.

9. SPIELMANN, *François I en St. Jean Baptiste*, in: "Revue de l'Art Ancien et Moderne," 1906, II, pp. 223-227, pl.

10. Described in the inventory by BAILLY, p. 125: "Buste of St. Sebastian, life size, holding an arrow, at Versailles in the XVII Century." The same della Palla owned a *Resurrection of Lazarus*, painted by Pontormo about 1529 for the King. MORTIMER CLAPP found a study made for this painting (*Les Dessins de Pontormo*, No. 6723).

11. HOLMES, in: "The Burlington Magazine," September 1921, pp. 107-108, supports the attribution to Leonard; HEVESY, in: "Pantheon," 1936, II, pp. 323-329 refutes this attribution and gives the work to Boltraffio. Would the woman represented on this painting be Lucrezia Crivelli, the mistress of Ludovic le More?



FIG. 1. — ROSSO. — Judith. — Engraved by Boyvin.

Aretin had sent him his portrait painted by Salviati; Francis I received from the same artist a *Betrayal of Dalila*, and he made Salviati come to France in 1544; Salviati, proud and melancholy, left the court after a year and a half, but only after having, most certainly, painted several pictures for the King, in addition to the decoration of the Castle of Dampierre which he did for the Cardinal of Lorraine. Of course, Rosso, Primaticcio and Niccolò dell'Abbate have also, besides their decorative work, painted for the royal collections some easel pictures intended for the royal castles.¹²

There is, however, a surprising gap; we find nothing by Michelangelo. The latter did write in 1546 to the King, answering his offer of work, that he would soon, "if he would be left some time to live," do for the King a marble piece, a bronze piece and a painting. But being at the time absorbed by his work at Saint Peters in Rome, he did not produce anything for the court of France. However, in 1533 Francis I had the opportunity of acquiring a painting by Michelangelo but he let it go by. Antonio Mini had come to France to present to the King the *Leda* by Michelangelo, but as the royal collections already had a copy of this work by Rosso, the proposition was not accepted.¹³

Another surprising gap is, that there was no work by Correggio, nor by the Parmesan — nothing by these two painters to whom Primaticcio owed so much and to whom the School of Fontainebleau is so much indebted. But it is perhaps just because of this debt — of these borrowings — which Primaticcio wanted to keep from being noticed that he did not let anything be bought from the masters of Parma.

Most of the paintings which we discussed so far, are the work of Florentine painters, as it was with the city of Florence that the King of France was in the most frequent and most consistent contact. The Medicis have played an important part in the spreading of Florentine art in France, either by recommending painters, by donating their works, or by furnishing names of intermediaries and dealers. The Ambassadors in Rome seem to have sent rather few paintings, and to have been interested mostly in assembling ancient Greek and Roman art.

The Republic of Venice often being quite antagonistic to France, the artistic relations between the two countries were less cordial and, as a result, the number of Venetian works in the royal collections was very scanty. True, in 1539, Titian had done from a medal the *Portrait of Francis I* for Aretino, and the latter presented it to the King. But it seems that this painting was the only Venetian work in the royal collections before the XVII Century with, however, a *Portrait of*

12. In 1532, the account books mentioned the acquisition of the "*Layda*" by Rosso. The King also owned a *Judith*, now lost (engraved in the XVI Century by Boyvin), and a painting, *Mars and Venus*, which was engraved by Caraglio.

13. See: M. ROY, *La Leda de Michel-Ange et celle du Rosso*, 1692. FATHER DAN (1692), and the inventories of the XVI Century, wrongly attributed Rosso's work to Michelangelo.



FIG. 2. — ANDREA DEL SARTO. — *Christ aux Anges*, engraving.

Gaston de Foix with the two mirrors by Savoldo, formerly given to Giorgione, and a copy of the *Madeleine* by Titian, now in the Museum of Bordeaux.

We wish to emphasize this fact, which Dimier has noted summarily, this aspect of the royal collections and these features of the contemporaneous taste being important for the understanding of the very tendencies of French painting of the XVI Century: that painting is not coloristic because it was deprived of the Venetian lesson — and, especially, the Titian one — in warm and beautiful color.¹⁴

* * *

Italian works were in the majority in the King's collection, but it would be an error to consider Francis I as being a partisan and a collector of works of the Italian school alone. He seems on the contrary, to have bought, with particular delectation Flemish works treating more picturesque subjects and imprinted with a more "Rabelaisian" spirit than the big Italian pictures whose refined sensuality may have appealed to him less.

In 1528, we see the King commissioning Victor Brodeau, Secretary of the Queen of Navarre, his sister, to bring him back from Flanders "*certain tableaux, pourtraits et menus ouvrages.*"¹⁵ In 1529 he bought from Jean Dubois, a dealer in Antwerp, a large number of pictures by those "droll" masters of the type of Bosch or the ancient Flemish painters: a *Dance of Peasants*, and "*un homme faisant un rubec de sa bouche, deux enfants se baisant, un enfant tenant une tête de mort, une dame d'honneur à la mode de Flandre tenant une chandelle et un pot, et les Fantosmes de St. Anthoine.*"¹⁶

He asked, as we have seen, Italian artists to come to France to stay with him, but he did the same regarding the Flemish artists. About 1525 he approached Jean Scorel who declined the invitation. He had more luck with Joost van Cleve, "*homme parfait et très rare pour adapter les couleurs,*"¹⁷ who came — a special messenger having been sent for him — to make the portraits of the King, the Queen and the young princes.¹⁸ It was another Flemish artist, Jean Clouet the elder, who executed the portraits of the royal family and received the title of painter and "*valet de chambre*" of the King.

The eclecticism of the King even made him acquire British works. Bernardin

14. As will soon be noticed, our list of Italian works is not exhaustive; some works executed in France by the pupils of the great Italian masters, for instance the large *Francis I*, of the Louvre, should be added to this list. Mention should also be made of the sojourn of Paris Bordone in Paris (1538?) and also of the pictures for which payments were made to painters or dealer-painters in Paris and in Lyon.

15. "Certain pictures, portraits and small works;" National Archives of France, KK96, p. 551^{vo}.

16. "A man making a '*rubec*' of his mouth, two children kissing each other, one child holding a skull, a lady of honor in the Flemish fashion holding a candle and pitcher, and the *Fantosmes de St. Anthoine*;" AAF, 1879, p. 44.

17. "Perfect man and very exceptional for the adaptation of colors."

18. L. GUICHARDINI, *Description des Pays-Bas*, 1625, p. 98. Portraits attributed to Joost van Cleve are known; that of *Francis I*, is now in the Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum (see: VALENTINER, Cat. Johnson Coll., III, p. 28, repr. p. 273), and it seems that the *Portrait of Eleonore of France* would be in the P. Larsen Collection, in London.



FIG. 3. — RAPHAEL. — St. Margaret. — Engraved by Thomassin.

Bouche, painter of Henry VIII, presented him in 1532 "*plusieurs tableaux et autres peintures.*"¹⁹ In exchange for that, Bouche received the sum of 400 *livres*.²⁰ These British paintings were certainly not genre paintings or pictures of piety, but actually the portraits of the King of England and of the noblemen of the Court.

French paintings do not seem to have interested the King, even in the case of royal portraits. Indeed, we see that he gave to Arthur Gouffier, the famous *Portrait of Jean le Bon*, now at the Louvre, and other historical portraits which were taken over by Gaignières. He only kept one *Charlemagne*, one *St. Louis*, one *Charles VII*, one *Louis XI* and one *Louis XII*, which are found mentioned in the inventory of 1692.²¹

* * *

It is not known in what manner the King was keeping his paintings at Amboise or at the Louvre. At the Castle of Fontainebleau this can be followed more closely. The most precious works were placed in the "*appartement des Bains.*" under the Francis I Gallery. They were neither placed on easels nor hung on the walls but, paradoxically enough, were fitted into gilded stucco framings which were much like those of the top Gallery. In a sort of dining or refreshments' room, decorated in 1543, were to be seen the *Rape of Proserpine* by Leonard, the *Charity* by Andrea del Sarto, the *Gaston de Foix* by Savoldo, a *Struggle of the Giants against the Gods*, probably by or after Giulio Romano, and several mythological pictures by an artist unknown to us, such as *Tantalus*, *Phaëton*, etc. The latter was engraved in 1545 by J. Mignon without indication of the painter's name. Then, in the next room, above the doors, was the *Judith* by Rosso and the *Pseudo-Bacchus* by Leonard. In another one, a rest-room, was the *Leda* by Rosso and a *Hercules* painted perhaps by Luca Penni. The historians of Fontainebleau agree in placing other famous paintings in the very hall of the "*Etuves.*" but this is merely hypothesis, since the decoration of this hall was changed at the end of the XVI Century.

The entire decoration — its very idea — is quite strange. To place precious originals in a series of bathrooms is surprising to us today. But we must think that such rooms then served as a place of relaxation, of rest and recreation. The contemporaries of Francis I considered them as the equivalent of the antique baths which were also decorated with paintings and sculpture. They admired their pic-

19. "Several pictures and other paintings."

20. LABORDE, *Renaissance des Arts*, I, p. 762; completed by Ms. fr. 15628, fol. 175^{vo} of the Bibliothèque Nationale (information furnished by MR. LEBEL). Francis I bought in 1523 a *View of London* by the Flemish painter-topographer Raf, or Raef (LABORDE, *ibid.*, p. 920).

21. The *Louis XI* is the famous profile portrait of the King; it was engraved as coming from Fontainebleau, in: J. DE BIE, *Les Vrais Portraits des Rois de France* . . . , 1634.

turesqueness and sumptuousness, and celebrated the agreeableness and charm these places had "*pour le contentement de l'oeil*,"²²

Religious paintings decorated the two chapels of the dungeon: the *St. Family* by Raphael was on the altar of the high chapel, and the *Visitation* by Sebastiano del Piombo was on that of the low chapel.

Not the entire royal collection was at Fontainebleau. Francis I also had paintings at the Louvre. It was precisely in his study — "*pour son service*,"^{22b} that is to say for his personal pleasure — that he had placed the Flemish works bought in 1529. But, certainly, the small pictures, the "droll" works and the portraits which were easy to move, were passed from one castle to another as, for example, the *Fantosmes de St. Anthoine*, the Flemish painting which, bought for the Louvre Palace, was to be found in the XVII Century in the Fontainebleau storerooms.

When one considers that the paintings were only one part of the King's collections — since Francis I also had a collection of drawings, including pencil portraits of which Thevet has saved one remnant, the *Pierre l'Hermite*, having it reproduced in the *Hommes Illustres* — ; that the King possessed a great number of important statues — the ancient marbles, more than one hundred twenty moldings in bronze brought back from Rome by Primaticcio and the plasters of several works by Michelangelo — and, finally, that he had a treasury of precious stones, jewelry, and silver china, a splendid library, and was assembling a "cabinet of curiosities" — one is surprised at the amplitude and the achievements of the undertakings of this King who was really the protector of the arts extolled by his contemporaries.

His successors carried on this task of his but little. Henry II and Catherine de Medici were more interested in architecture than in painting, and gathered only French and Florentine family portraits. Henry III must have had more taste for painting than his father and his brothers, and seems to have bought a work by Tintoretto while passing through Venice. After him we have to wait for the reign of Louis XIV to see a sovereign preoccupied with the enrichment of the royal collections.

At the end of the XVII Century, when the latter established himself in Versailles, he had the ancient collection of Francis I brought over to him. The pictures had long ago left the *Appartement des Bains* — a not very pleasant sojourn for them — where they had been soaked by warm steam, "*gâtés par l'humidité*,"²³ Under Henry IV they were replaced by copies, and deposited in the "Pavilion of Paintings."

22. "For the enjoyment of the eye." See: HERBET, *Le Château de Fontainebleau*, 1938, pp. 93, 149-156.

22b. "For his service."

23. "Spoiled by humidity."

It was from there that they were taken between 1692 and 1695 to be brought to Versailles. They are listed in the Bailly inventory mostly under whimsical attributions, and were eventually again dispersed, the best finally finding their way to the Louvre.²⁴

JEAN ADHEMAR.



24. Henry VIII was concerned, as Francis I was, with showing himself as a protector of the fine arts and with gathering an art collection. A letter from the French Ambassador Marillac to Montmorency, dated June 9, 1539, testifies to such intentions: "He delights now in painting and embroidery, having sent men to France, Flanders, Italy and elsewhere for masters of these arts and also for musicians and other ministers of pastime." (*Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, vol. XIV, part I, No. 1092, p. 498.



CHARLES POËRSON

1609-1667

AND THE TAPESTRIES OF THE
LIFE OF THE VIRGIN
IN THE STRASBOURG CATHEDRAL

OF THE oeuvre of Charles Poërsen all memory has been lost and if his name evokes a feeble echo in our minds, it is because of the part played by his son, Charles-François, as Director of the Academy of France in Rome from 1704 to 1725. The acquisition, by the Museum of Metz, just before World War II, of a painting by Charles Poërsen, the subject of which has remained unexplained until now, has served as the starting point for the present study. This study appeared at first as having to be limited merely to the iconographic prob-

lem. But the exhibition in Paris of the set of tapestries of the *Life of Virgin Mary* belonging to the Cathedral of Strasbourg, enabled us to examine these tapestries closely and to see that Charles Poërsen was the author of a part of the series of paintings from which these tapestries were copied. The personality of the artist thus acquired more importance and seemed deserving of more attention and wider recognition.

Charles Poërsen belongs to the group of artists of the first half of the XVII Century whose life was spent in the circle of Simon Vouet and who worked in the manner of that master. In spite of the fact that he was mentioned by XVII and XVIII Century authors among the pupils of Vouet, no biographical notice — not even a short one — has ever been devoted to him. Often the label *Lorrain* (from Lorraine) was attached to his name: "Poerson," or "Person, le Lorrain." Ancient as well as recent publications furnish very little information on him and most of this is inexact. He is said to have been born either in 1600 or in 1609, either in Metz, or in Vic-sur-Seille, in Lorraine — like Georges de la Tour. He is also said to have been the son of André Poërsen, a "Procureur Général" of the temporal property of the Bishopry of Metz, at Vic, who was created a nobleman in 1588 by the Cardinal of Lorraine, Charles, son of the Duke Charles III.

The place where Charles Poërsen saw the light of day still remains unknown, but from the date of his death, March 5, 1667, — when he is said to have died at the age of fifty-eight¹ — the date of his birth can be deduced as having taken place in 1609. The origins of the painter might easily have been different from those later attributed to him and might also have been less brilliant. A notarized document furnishes the name of his mother as Catherin Cointain;² on the other hand, a certain Catherine Cointain, god-mother in 1640 of the first son of Poërsen, is mentioned on the christening certificate as the wife of Jean Persson, merchant in Paris, rue Saint Martin.³ Could these be our artist's parents who, in this case, would have resided in Paris for several years? The artist himself lived all his life at the rue Saint Martin.

Research made at Metz has not yet resulted in more precise information.⁴ The parish registers and the notary minutes frequently mention the name of the Poërsens as inhabitants of Vic, but also mention other people of the same name as living at Metz. For the time being it is not possible to establish definitely all the different relationships between the various members of the family. It is quite likely that Charles Poërsen did belong to the Lorraine stock.

1. O. FIDIÈRE, *Etat-Civil des Peintres et Sculpteurs de l'Académie Royale*, Paris, 1883, p. 13.

2. Archives of the Moselle, B. 3365. Inventory after death of Françoise Bruyant, wife of Charles Poërsen.

3. LABORDE card index, 12.167.

4. Mr. Claude Sibertin-Blanc has kindly taken charge of the research at the Departmental Archives of the Moselle and the Archives of the city of Metz. We owe to him all the information regarding the family of Poërsen.



FIG. 1. — CHARLES POERSON. — Nativity. — Louvre, Paris.

According to several authors of this region, especially Jacquot,⁵ Charles Poërsen was sent to Italy at the expense of the Duke of Lorraine, Charles III, together with Jacques de Bellange, Charles Meslin and Charles Dauphin, and in Rome would have been a pupil of Vouet. All this is rather incompatible. First of all, Charles III died in 1608, one year before the birth of Poërsen. As to Jacques de Bellange, very much older than Poërsen, the proof of his trip to Italy still remains to be produced. Finally, at the time Vouet returned to Paris, in 1627, Poërsen was only eighteen years old. If the two artists did meet in the Eternal City, their relationship there must have been of very short duration.

Until otherwise proven, it can be admitted that Poërsen, coming to Paris in



FIG. 2. — After CHARLES POËRSON. — Supper at the House of Simon, engraved by L. Simmoneau. — Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

his youth with his family, received art instruction in the capital from Vouet. His having made a trip to Italy is not out of the question. But the first definite fact we have of him is his wedding celebration on October 25, 1638 in Paris.⁶ He married Françoise Briant, whose sister, Madeleine, was the wife of the painter Antoine Herault. Through this marriage Poërsen was, some twenty years later, to become the uncle of Noël Coypel. From then on he was never again to leave Paris.

He must have kept contact with the east of France since

his widow after his death went to end her days at Metz where their oldest daughter had twice been married. The younger daughters also were married at Metz, one of them remaining there and the other eventually moving to Vic. The latter was the mother of the painter, Charles-Louis Chéron. The fourth daughter of Poërsen became a nun with the regular canonesses of St. Marie-Madeleine, of Metz. In addition, the painter was the owner of two farms in the country around Metz.⁷

During his lifetime Charles Poërsen gained some recognition. Master at the corporation of painters, he passed to the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculp-

5. ALBERT JACQUOT, *Essai de Répertoire des Artistes Lorrains*, Paris, 1900, vol. I, p. 90.

6. LABORDE card index, 12.171.

7. Archives of the Moselle, former office of Notary Bertrand, 3E3649 and 3652; Parish of Saint Gorgon records, 3E.3010; Inventories, B.3358 and 3365.



FIG. 3. — CHARLES POERSON. — The Poisoning of Camme and Sinorix at the Temple of Diana. — Museum of Metz, France.

ture in 1651, at the time the fusion between the Academy and the community of artists took place. Immediately afterward he was appointed professor at the academy and, became its rector in 1658.⁸ He has certainly produced an impressive amount of works, and in all genres.

Indeed, he also made his contribution to decorative painting. A collaborator of Eustache Le Sueur in the decoration of the bathroom of Anne of Austria at the Louvre,⁹ working with Juste d'Egmont on decorating the *Galerie des Hommes Illustres* at the Palais-Cardinal,¹⁰ he also painted for the Hotel Amelot de Bizeuil,

8. *Procès-Verbaux de l'Académie de Peinture et de Sculpture*, vol. I.

9. *Mémoire Historique des Ouvrages de M. Lesueur*, in: "Archives de l'Art Français," 1852-1853, p. 75.

10. EDM. BONNAFFÉ, *Les Collections de Richelieu*, Paris, 1883, p. 11.



FIG. 4. — Camme, Princess of Galatie, engraving. — From: FATHER PIERRE LE MOYNE, *La Galerie des Femmes Fortes*, 1647 (Detail).

an *Aurore* (a Dawn) for the ceiling of the staircase of the first court.¹¹ None of these murals have been preserved. Of even shorter duration were the paintings which he made for the triumphal arch built on the Place Dauphine in 1660 on the occasion of the wedding of Louis XIV to Maria-Theresa. He executed this work in 1662, under the direction of Le Brun, with Hallé, Francar, Lhomme and Bacot, all "painters of repute."¹²

However, Poërsen's activity in the field of religious painting seems to have been even more important. This is represented today by two canvases only: one small *Nativity* at the Louvre (Fig. 1)¹³ and the *First Preaching of Saint Peter at Jerusalem*, which he executed in 1642 for Notre Dame in Paris where it can still be viewed at the mass vestry room; it is of a large size but, unfortunately, is poorly lighted and can hardly be seen there. *St. Paul at the Island*

of Malta, which he painted in 1653 for the same purpose, has not been preserved. Lost also are six paintings of the *Life of St. Louis* placed at the "Quinze-Vingts"¹⁴ and the scenes of the *Life of the Virgin Mary* painted by him for the private chapel of Anne of Austria at the Palais-Cardinal.¹⁵

Some engravings preserve the memory of the lost paintings of Poërsen, such as *Jacob's Ladder*, *Joseph Explaining his Dreams*, the *Angel Raphael and Tobie*, the *St. Madeleine*, the *Sermon of Our Saviour*, the *Supper at the House of Simon* (Fig. 2), the *Virgin with the Child*, engraved after Poërsen by Guillaume

11. DÉZALLIER D'ARGENVILLE, *Voyage Pittoresque*, Paris, 1752, p. 217.

12. *L'Entrée Triomphale de leurs Majestez Louis XIV Roy de France et de Navarre et Marie-Thérèse d'Autriche son Espouse dans la Ville de Paris*, Paris, 1662, p. 24.

13. This painting which came to the Louvre with the Ryaux donation is 0.53 m. high on 0.37 m. wide; it is signed: C. Poerson.

14. "Nouvelles Archives de l'Art Français," 1886, 3d series, vol. II, p. 165.

15. SAUVAL, *Histoire et Recherche des Antiquités de la Ville de Paris*, Paris, 1726, vol. II, p. 169.

and Nicolas Chasteau, Clossié, Trouvain and L. Simonneau.¹⁶ Of other paintings, lost or destroyed, we only know the names. The *Adoration of the Shepherds* of the Church Sainte-Croix-de-la Bretonnerie,¹⁷ and the *Adoration of the Magi* from the Carmelites of Pontoise,¹⁸ were confiscated during the Revolution. The question remains as to whether they were painted by the father or by



FIG. 5. — CLAUDE VIGNON. — Camme, Princess of Galatie, preparatory drawing for the engraving in the *Galerie des Femmes Fortes* (see Fig. 4). — Formerly Bloxham Collection, bequeathed to the Rugby College.

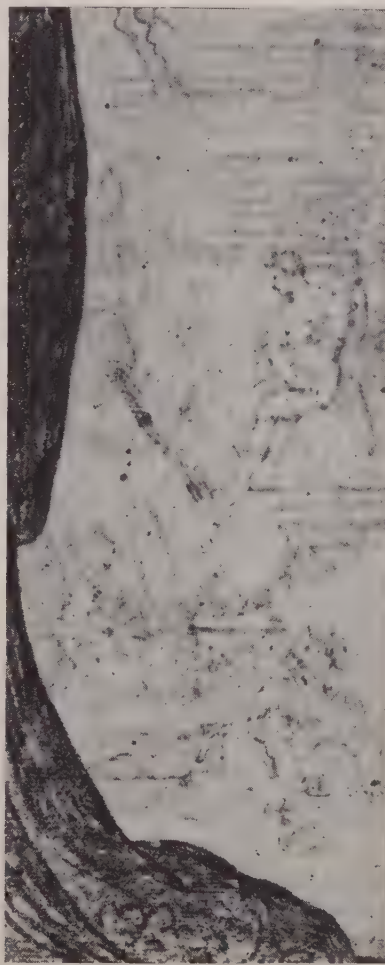


FIG. 6. — CLAUDE VIGNON. — Camme, Princess of Galatie, preparatory drawing. — Rugby College (Detail of Fig. 5).

the son. The same question may be asked in regard to another canvas which was formerly to be

16. Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

17. "Bulletin Archéologique" (publié par le Comité des Arts et Monuments), 1844-1845, vol. III; paintings brought to the National Depository by Lenoir.

18. Archives of the Louvre Museum, Revolutionary Confiscations.

found at the Saint-Martin-des-Champs Church in Paris.¹⁹ Neither do we have more precise information on the painting at one time exhibited at the assembly room of the St. Luke Academy. A scene from the Apocalypse it was, according to the 1776 inventory, more likely the work of the father.²⁰

Mr. François Boucher, Curator of the Carnavalet Museum, called my attention to a *Crucifixion* by Poërsen, coming from the "Dames St. Catherine, called Hospitable," taken over by Lenoir and placed at the Louvre on *messidor* (October 22) of the year V of the Revolution.²¹ So far we have not found

a trace of it. To this same religious genre belong three beautiful sketches in sanguine by Poërsen, today at the Department of Drawings of the Louvre.²²

Until rather recently we did not know of any paintings by Poërsen treating a profane subject. In 1938 the Society of the Friends of the Museum of Metz was fortunate enough to acquire one of rather large size (Fig. 3).²³ This was recanvased and partially restored. It is in a fairly good state of preservation and bears, at the left, the signature: *C. Poërsen I. fecit.*



FIG. 7. — After CHARLES POËRSEN. — Visitation, engraved by Clossié. — Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

While the authenticity of this painting is beyond doubt, its subject remains enigmatic.

Through good fortune, a drawing by Claude Vignon, which held the key to this mystery (Figs. 5 and 6), happened to pass through the hands of Mr. Anthony Blunt, of the Warburg Institute, in London, just at the time I consulted him on this

19. GERMAIN BRICE, *Nouvelle Description de la Ville de Paris*, Paris, 1725, vol. II, p. 38.

20. *Histoire de l'Académie de Saint-Luc*, in: "Archives de l'Art Français," 1915, p. 95; Charles-François Poërsen, the son, never belonged to this corporation; at the age of twenty-four he was admitted (*agréé*) to the Royal Academy and five years later made a member.

21. COURAJOD, *Alexandre Lenoir . . . et le Musée des Monuments Français*, Paris, 1878, vol. I, p. 121, No. 863; Mr. Boucher, Curator of the Carnavalet Museum, called my attention to an *Apotheosis of Virgin Mary* by Poërsen, painted in the manner of Le Sueur, which appeared at the Trelot Sale, May 22, 1793 (H: 0.445m.; W: 0.31m.).

22. Nos. 32.415, 32.416, and 32.417. The influence of Rubens is strongly felt in these drawings.

23. H: 1.35m.; W: 1.20m.

matter.²⁴ The figure of the woman on the drawing is in sanguine and the background is drawn with a black pencil. It is 0.323m. high on 0.213m. wide and must have been made in view of an engraving. A print of the same size belongs to the series of twenty plates illustrating *La Galerie des Femmes Fortes*, a volume published in 1647 for Father Pierre Le Moyne, of the Company of Jesus (Fig. 4). The woman standing with a bowl in her hand and occupying the entire sheet of the drawing, is Camme, Princess of Galatie, the heroine of a drama dating from as early as the year 236 A.D. Especially deserving attention is a scene at the right, in the background, very lightly sketched by the pencil of Vignon and sharpened by the etching needle of Abraham Bosse (Fig. 6). This scene is made intelligible through a text by Father P. Le Moyne which we must summarize here.

Camme was the wife of Sinnate when Sinorix fell in love with her. Rejected, the latter killed Sinnate in the hope that he would get more attention from the widow. Camme, however, had only hatred for him. But she pretended that she did respond to his desire and, on the day of the wedding in the Temple of

24. I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Anthony Blunt who called my attention to the volume of FATHER LE MOYNE and to a photograph of the beautiful drawing by Vignon. This drawing comes from the Bloxham Collection, bequeathed to the Rugby College (Figs. 5 and 6).



FIG. 8. — Attributed to CHARLES FRANÇOIS POERSON, here tentatively attributed to CHARLES POERSON. — Cincinnatus Returning to his Plough. — Museum of Mans, France

Diana, she poisoned the nuptial bowl, causing the death of them both.

It is this tragic moment that Vignon and Poërsen caught. The former shows Camme, at the left, prostrated; behind her, in the clouds, is Sinnate; in the middle, there is the altar of Diana; and at the right Sinorix, the fatal bowl fallen from his hands, is lying on the ground. Seen in reverse by Poërsen, the same scene appears less warm under his brush. The pose of Camme is almost identical, although the ghostly figure of her cruelly avenged husband does not appear here; as to Sinorix, he is represented with a look of assurance at the very moment he is about to drink from the bowl "the first sweetness of marriage," unaware that he will be drinking death.

It would seem that the story of Camme has been the inspiration of artists only rarely.²⁵ It has had some success with dramatic authors,²⁶ and Thomas Corneille, on January 26, 1661, in the theatre of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, for the first time presented his tragedy in five acts and in verse — *Camma, Reine de Galatie*.

Poërsen, who lived in the vicinity of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, must have seen the tragedy performed. Does this imply that he received the first idea for his painting from this performance, and that he eventually consulted the volume of Father P. Le Moyne and the engravings made after Vignon? This double supposition is not too absurd. In addition to the fact that Vignon and Charles Poërsen could not ignore each other,²⁷ the works of Father P. Le Moyne were very widely read in the XVII Century.²⁸ Indeed, would Pascal ever have used his caustic vein in the XI *Provinciale*, as he did in regard to the author of the *Dévotion Aisée* and of the *Peintures Morales*, were the latter not benefitting from public favor?

We wonder whether we should not add to the credit of Poërsen two paintings of the Museum of Mans, *Episodes of the Life of Cincinnatus*, listed in the catalogue of that Museum under Numbers 72 and 73 and there attributed to Charles-François Poërsen, the son (Fig. 8). These two canvases which had belonged to Bourgevin de Vialart de Saint-Morys, Counselor of the Parliament of Paris, were sent to Mans by the Government of the year VII of the Revolution. They are mentioned on a list of objects confiscated from the emigrees on the 26th of *Prairial* (September) of the year V, as being paintings by Simon Vouet ascribed

25. Mr. Blunt has made known to me an etching by Pietro Testa: *The Servants of Sinorix bringing their Master back in a Carriage, after his Poisoning by Camma in the Temple of Diana*, (H: 0.27m.; W: 0.405m.); two states of that etching are preserved at the Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

26. *Camma*, tragedy in five acts in verse by NICOLAS DE MONTREUX CALLED OLLENIX DU MONT-SACRÉ, produced for the first time in 1581; *Camma*, tragedy by FATHER MICHEL HOYER, in 1631.

27. With Baugin and Buyster, they formed the delegation which was sent by the master painters to the Royal Academy of Painting in 1651 (A. DE MONTAIGLON, *Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire de l'Académie Royale de Peinture* . . . , Paris, 1853, vol. I, p. 103).

28. *La Galerie des Femmes Fortes* was published in numerous editions: 1. Gr.in.fo, 1647; 2. In-12, 1660; then, a series of five; in 1652, the book was translated into English; in 1701, it was translated into Italian.



FIG. 9. — CHARLES POERSON (?). — Rest of the Saint Family during the Flight to Egypt, drawing. — Louvre, Paris.

to P. Poërsen.²⁹ It is difficult to keep them attributed to Poërsen the son. They seem indeed to be of the school of Vouet. But might they not be by Poërsen the father? We have nothing to affirm this.

* * *

Sparse as is the information concerning the oeuvre of Charles Poërsen, it has been said — and in particular by Félibien³⁰ — that this painter worked on “stories for tapestries.” To my knowledge, however, his name is not to be found in specialized works treating this subject and it is through graphic documents alone that we will have to establish the participation of Poërsen in the set of tapestries of the *Life of the Virgin*.³¹

Starting with the fifth tapestry of the series which represents the *Visitation*,

29. “Archives de l’Art Français,” 1912, p. 322.

30. FÉLIBIEN, *Entretien sur les Vies et sur les Ouvrages des plus Excellens Peintres*, Paris, 1685-1688, Vol. II, p. 488.

31. We assume that the history of this set of tapestries is known and wish only to refer the reader to the scholarly study devoted to the set by JULES GUIFFREY, *Tapisseries de la Cathédrale de Strasbourg: la Vie de la Vierge*, Paris, 1902.

we must begin by studying the broad lines of the composition: Two groups, one formed by Mary and Elizabeth, and the other by Joseph and Zacharie; to the right, the woman at her window, reproduced on the cover of the catalogue, and the dog on the steps of the staircase; at the left, a donkey in front of a thistle; in the background, two architectural arcades; and on the top, three angels on clouds.

An identical *Visitation* is to be found among the prints of the Bibliothèque Nationale (Fig. 7).³² It bears, on the right, at the bottom, the inscription: *Persson pinxit, Clossié sculp.* The engraving and the tapestry are of exactly the same proportions, but the engraved subject is much more concentrated. Small differences can be noted: in the background there is only one architectural arcade; the angel at the right is slightly modified; on the tapestry some details have been added, such as a cane at the feet of Elizabeth and a piece of wood near the staircase.

A comparative study of both shows that a now lost picture painted by Poërsen and engraved by Clossié (identified as Antoine Clouzier) was copied by the tapestry maker. In the very scholarly monograph he devoted to the Strasbourg set of tapestries, Jules Guiffrey cautiously attributed to Philippe de Champaigne the two first compositions only: the *Birth of Virgin Mary* and the *Presentation of Mary to the Temple*. "We should," said he, "search among the contemporary masters, among the pupils of Vouet, or de Champaigne himself, for those who had been called to assist Philippe de Champaigne in this great work. But the secondary artists of this period had no such originality as to make it easy for us to discern their works from a mere study of their intrinsic qualities in the absence of a positive text and of authentic proof." Does not, however, the print at the Cabinet des Estampes furnish us precisely with such authentic proof? The assistant, or one of the assistants, who collaborated on the work with Philippe de Champaigne must then have been Charles Poërsen.

One point, however, remains to be elucidated. We know that the set of tapestries was composed of fourteen panels. We can definitely not take away from Philippe de Champaigne the two scenes which have always been ascribed to him. But to consider Poërsen as the artist who executed the pasteboard for the *Visitation*, does not imply that he also made the other eleven panels. Still, we are happily able to enlarge his contribution to the set with almost complete certainty.

When we place in parallel the *Nativity* of the Louvre (Fig. 1) and the tapestry treating the same subject, we see that despite the fact that the scenes are in reverse of each other, the analogy between them is striking. Virgin Mary, the kneeling angel on the first plane, with his rather particular curly hair, and the angel standing behind with his hands stretched towards the sky — to mention only the principal figures — are all alike.

The *Rest of the Saint Family during the Flight to Egypt* — a drawing in the

32. Oeuvre of Poërsen, Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Louvre (Fig. 9) — seems indeed to be the first draft for the painting which was imitated by the tapestry maker.³³ In the central group, only the pose of the Child has been changed; the kneeling angels offering baskets of fruit are identical; the donkey, whom charming cherubs lead and water, at the right in the drawing, has been placed at the left in the tapestry.

We can also place the eleventh panel, the *Wedding of Cana*, into relation with a print, the *Supper at the House of Simon*, engraved by L. Simonneau after a painting by Poërsen (Fig. 2).³⁴ Several analogous figures are found in both, namely, at the left, a servant with a nude torso who supports a jug on his shoulder with his lifted right arm.

A close study of the tapestries reveals, from the fifth panel on, such complete likenesses in the faces, the poses, the costumes of the figures, as well as in the background architecture and draperies that the attribution of the ten last pieces of the set to the same artist — Poërsen — becomes quite natural and fully justified. *Virgin Mary's Marriage* and the *Annunciation* seem to be from another hand. Should they be attributed, as are the two first scenes, to Philippe de Champaigne or are they of another artist who yet remains to be discovered? This cannot, for the time being, be answered.

A larger number of paintings by Poërsen must be gathered to appreciate entirely his talent. Although a second-rate artist, he deserves a great deal of esteem. Perhaps we should think of him occasionally in relation to some canvases attributed to Vouet without sufficient certainty. Actually, it was Poërsen's praise that Jules Guiffrey was indirectly extolling when making the following appreciation of the work of the then unknown artists responsible for the creation of the set of tapestries of the *Life of Virgin Mary*: "The drawing of the original pictures, to the extent it can be judged by the interpretation of the tapestry maker, leaves nothing to be desired. It bears only harmonious and noble lines. It is a solemn art or, if you like, a slightly cold and stiff one, but then try to cite among the artists of our own time^[35] many painters able to imprint equal majesty on religious scenes." We could hardly state it better.

JEANNE LEJEAUX.

33. I wish to thank Mr. Rouchès, Curator at the Department of Drawings of the Louvre Museum, to whom I am indebted for a photograph of this drawing, No. 32.418, pen and bistre wash; H: 0.282m.; W: 0.358m.

34. Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. On the frame of the engraving at the left, we read: *Person le Père in. et pinxit*, and in the middle: *L. Simonneau le Jeune Sculpsit*.

35. 1902.



PORTRAITS BY RIGAUD IN THE SLAVIC COUNTRIES

IT IS highly desirable that we should some day have a monograph on Hyacinthe Rigaud of the type Count Arnould Doria devoted to Louis Tocqué. Such a volume in which would be gathered the many portraits of French and foreign noblemen who had sat for the celebrated court painter of Versailles, would serve as a precious witness of the more than sixty years' evolution of French taste, as well as France's art supremacy and influence in Europe.

Carrying on Mr. Louis Réau's studies on French art abroad,¹ and the research

1. J. ROMAN, *Le Livre de Raison de H. Rigaud*, Paris, 1919; L. RÉAU, *Histoire de l'Expansion de l'Art Français*, I, *Monde Slave et Orient*, II, *Belgique . . .*, Paris, 1924, 1928; and *IBID.*, *Catalogue de l'Art Français dans les Musées Russes*, Paris, 1929; D. ROVINSKI, *Slovar Rousskikh Gravirovannikh Portretov*, St. Petersburg, 1887. In order not to burden this article with too many footnotes, this will be our only reference to the above-mentioned works which are basic in the field of our present discussion and from which we have drawn much valuable information for this article.



FIG. 1. — RIGAUD, — Portrait of Count Dominique-André de Kaunitz, 1692. — Castle, Slavkov (Austerlitz), Moravia.

of Mr. J. Roman on the Rigaud paintings which have been preserved, we wish to contribute to the subject a tentative list of the works which were commissioned to Rigaud by members of the aristocracy in Slavic countries, as well as of the portraits of Rigaud which, though painted in France, have, in the course of centuries, come to these countries through a series of historical good fortunes.

Studying the famous *Livre de Raison* (Ledger-diary) of Rigaud, one discovers, among its most picturesque entries, the names of Prussian, Polish and Czech princes together with those of the Austrian landed gentry of the Slav countries of the Saint-Empire.

Mentioned foremost are the members of the Fürstenberg family. Cardinal Guillaume-Egon de Fürstenberg, bishop of Strasbourg, had his portrait painted prior to 1693 — the date on which the artist delivered to him "*deux coppies*" (two copies) of his portrait. And it seems that some distant reflections of Rigaud's art can be discovered in a rather mediocre painting of the Salle des Chevaliers (Hall of Knights) of the Castle of Krivoklat, the ancient Czech estate of the family.² The bishop of Strasbourg is there represented in front of an arcade which opens on a view of the spire of the city's Cathedral.

Marie de Ligny, niece of the Chancellor Seguier, and wife of Antoine Egon, Count, and later Prince, de Fürstenberg, commissioned Rigaud, in 1690, to paint her portrait with four copies and, after ten years, ordered a fifth copy of the same portrait.

In 1692, Count André Morsztin, former Polish Ambassador, who settled in France and became Marquis d'Arc-en-Barrois, had a portrait of himself together with his daughter painted by Rigaud. So also, five years later, did one of his sons, with whose portrait may be connected the extant note containing a statement of payment made in 1705 to the copyist, Bailleul, for "*l'habit du fils du chambelant de Pologne*" (the garments of the son of the Chamberlain of Poland).

In 1698, a Czech dignitary of the Saint-Empire, Count Frederick Harrach, Minister of the Low Countries (1696-1749), came for sittings to Rigaud's studio from where there were issued, the following year, seven copies of his portrait, painted by Tournières and "*habillé*" ("dressed" — the clothes painted) by Vienot. One of the seven versions of the portrait belongs to the Harrach Gallery in Vienna.³ And among the entries in the *Livre de Raison* for the same year is to be found — together with the mention of *Aracch*, or *Harak* — that of the no less distorted name of *Caunit* which merits special attention.

2. "Soupis Pamatek Ceskyh," Prague, XXXVI (1911), (*Repertorium*, by A. CECHNER, p. 121). In this portrait, the Cardinal has the same head as on the engraving by Jollain, dated 1687 (Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Iconography, N 2).

3. If our memory does not betray us, the portrait in the Harrach Gallery is similar to the print by Fr. Harrewyn (half-length, turned three quarters to the right), which leads to our belief that the "Aracch" mentioned by Rigaud in his *Livre de Raison* was Frédéric Harrach, and not François Harrach as was suggested by Mr. J. ROMAN.



FIG. 2. — RIGAUD. — Portrait of Count Maximilian-Ulrich de Kaunitz, son of Dominique-André de Kaunitz and father of the Chancellor of Maria Theresa, 1698. — Castle, Slavkov (Austerlitz), Moravia.

The Czech family of Counts — eventually Princes — de Kaunitz gave to the Austrian Empire a whole dynasty of diplomats, the best known of whom is Venceslas-Antoine, Chancellor of Maria-Theresa.⁴ It is the portraits of the father and the grandparents of this favorite of the Empress, that Rigaud painted. At the Castle of the Kaunitz family at Slavkov, in Moravia (before World War II belonging to the Counts Pálffy) which has passed into history under its German name — Austerlitz — were still to be found before the war, three portraits definitely deserving the interest of art historians. One of these is the *Portrait of Count Dominique-André de Kaunitz* (1655-1705) who, in 1697, was the Emperor's representative at the signing of the Treaty of Ryswick (Fig. 1). The inscription on the back of the canvas — *HYAZINTHE RIGAUT PINXIT 1692 à Paris* — must have been copied by the German restorer after the signature on the original stay. The liveliness of the portrait is emphasized by the easy, natty pose, the brilliance of the reflections on the steel of the armor and the happy quality of the shadows on the velvet of the coat painted in a "crushed strawberry" color.

The inventory of the Castle, made in 1812, also attributes to "*Riggo*" the portrait of same size (0.78m.; 0.61m.) but cut in oval, of the wife of Dominique-André de Kaunitz, born Eleonore de Sternberg. This painting, which represents the Countess de Kaunitz in a front view bust, served as model for one of the eight decorative portraits in the Castle's dining room painted by Maurer in the second half of the century.

Mme. C. Jahodova Halova, to whom we are indebted for some valuable information on the Kaunitz family's art sponsorship, was kind enough to make known to us the fragment of a rather curious letter written to Dominique André by his son, Maximilian-Ulrich (1679-1746). Having reached, in 1698, the age of nineteen years, this young gentleman was on his way to Paris where he was to complete his education for the brilliant diplomatic career opening up before him. On October 27, he wrote from Bar-le-Duc⁵ to his parents that, according to their desire, he would ask in Paris that his portrait be made by Rigaud who had painted that of his father a few years earlier. But he says that, in order for him to have his portrait of exactly the same proportions as his father's, they should send him a string of that size instead of giving him the measurements in Moravian feet and "thumbs" (possibly inches) which would certainly be of no use to the Parisian artist.

As witnessed by a 1698 entry in the *Livre de Raison*, Rigaud did make the portrait of young Kaunitz. The string in question must have been sent to him, since the portraits of the father and the son are of equal size. But the latter (Fig. 2) is of different inspiration and shows an up-to-then unknown aspect of Rigaud's

4. He had, as portraitists of the French school of painting, Louis Tocqué, François Casanova and perhaps Liotard. See: COUNT ARNAULD DORIA, *Tocqué*, (*Catalogue*, N° 150) and C. VER HEYDEN DE LANCEY, *Les Portraits de Casanova*, in: "Gazette des Beaux-Arts," 1934, I, pp. 106-107.

5. Archives of Slavkov-Austerlitz, III/107.

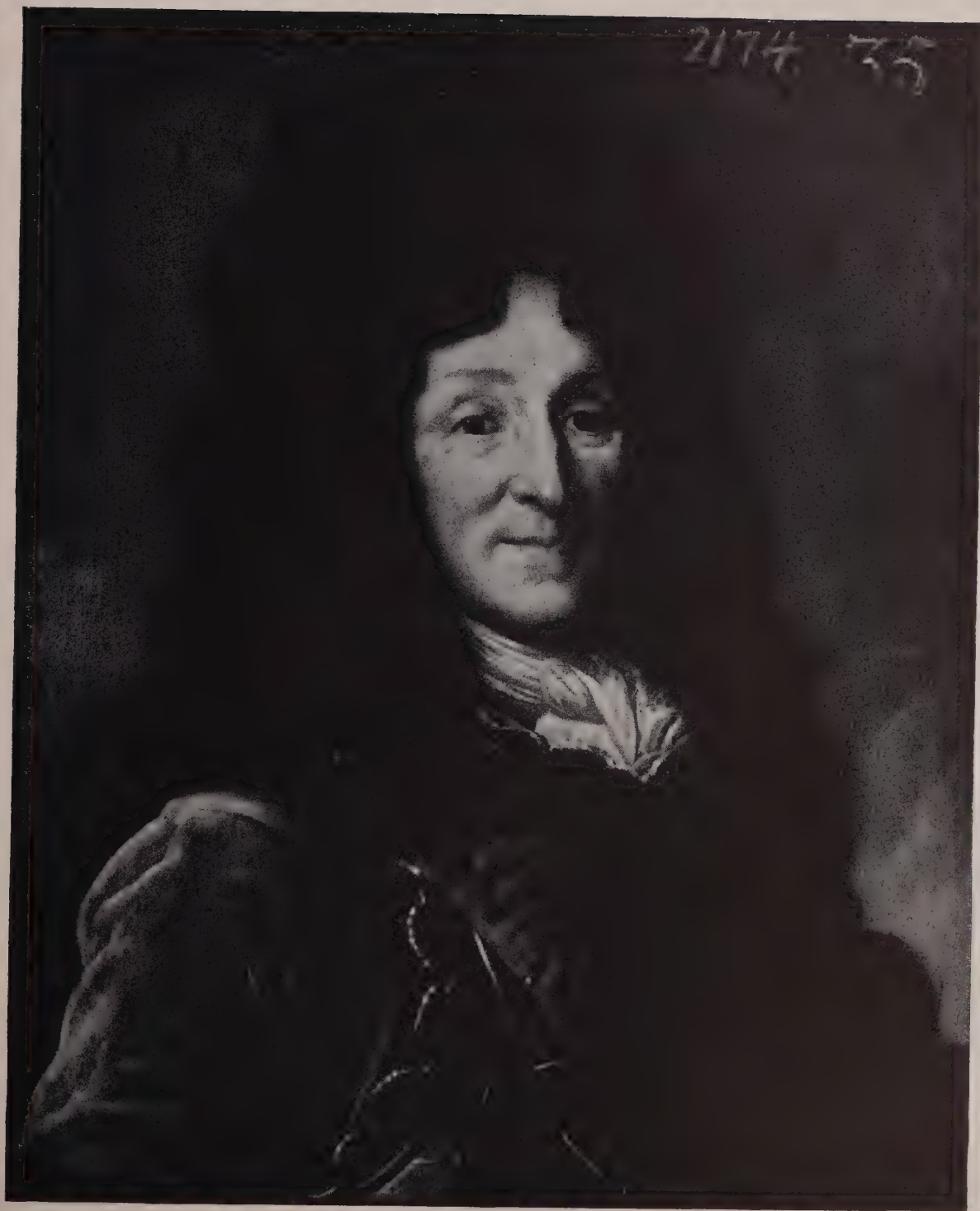


FIG. 3. — RIGAUD. — Portrait of Chrétien-Louis de Montmorency Luxembourg, Marshal of France, 1733. — Formerly Collection of Mr. Adam Tarnowski.

oeuvre. This image of the youth — represented in informal morning attire, with dreaming eyes, sensual lips, and a delicate oval face, framed not by a wig but by a splendid thick head of natural blond curly hair — has an intense personal expression which the King's painter was generally not accustomed to confer on his models.⁶ While in the portrait of Kaunitz the father, we see Rigaud in his customary role of a portrait painter of high society, anxious to flatter his clientèle, in that of Kaunitz the son, he reveals himself to us as an artist of great sensibility, emotionally touched by the beauty of his model. We can only regret that unscrupulous restorations of the last century have tarnished and dulled the original workmanship of these paintings which would otherwise have ranked high in the best collections of French art.

From 1699 dates the portrait, painted with three copies, of another nineteen-year old nobleman — the Count, future Prince, Adam-François-Charles Schwarzenberg whom the *Livre de Raison* calls *Schwasemberg* or *Svasseberg*. In trying to identify these paintings at the castles of Krumlov (Krumau) and Hluboka (Frauenberg), in Bohemia, we found, among many portraits of the equerry of Charles VI, only one which appears to be in the manner of Rigaud, but the sitter of that portrait seems to be of a more advanced age.

For the same year, the *Livre de Raison* mentions two versions of the portrait of *Mr. Jourdain sent from Poland*, the identification of which with the *Feldzeugmeister* (Ordnance Officer) *Jordan*, in the Museum of Brunswick, had been considered, but rather hesitatingly, by Mr. J. Roman.

André Artamonovitch Matveieff who, from 1706 to 1711, represented Moscovia (Moscovite Tsardom) in Paris, asked the King's painter for a portrait of himself and two of his wife, born Princess Bariatinsky. The portrait of the Ambassador was engraved by J. Kolpakoff in 1766. Before the Russian Revolution, the Durnoyo family owned the original of that portrait, and an ancient copy of it was in the Imperial Palace of Gatchina. The *Portrait of Madame Matveieff* then belonged to Count Cheremetieff, in St. Petersburg.

The again mentioned *palatine*, Count Ogenski (or perhaps *Auquinqy*), the painter's client in 1712-1713, must be the Michel Martien Oginski, *voievoda* (military mayor) of Vitebsk (1672-1750) to whom the panegyrists of his fifth wedlock referred to as *palatinus Vitebscensis*. A portrait of Oginski is listed in the inventories of the pictures belonging to King Stanislas Auguste.⁷

During 1772 a *Prince Doulourouski* is mentioned in the *Livre de Raison*.

6. We must, however, call attention to the great likeness that exists between this painting and the potrait of the young *Antonio Balducci*, painted by Baldassare Franceschini, at the Pitti Palace, Florence, N° 1578.

7. M. MANKOWSKI, *Galerja Stan. Augusta*, Lwow, 1932. Thanks to the helpful information which our friend, L. GRODECKI, gave us, we were able to identify Rigaud's "palatine" by consulting: "Bibliographia Polska," Krakaw, vol. XXIII (1909), p. 293. Grégoire Antoine Oginski, Commandor of Sandomir, suggested by Mr. J. ROMAN as the sitter of this portrait, died in 1709, that is, three or four years before Rigaud painted the portrait.



FIG. 4. — After RIGAUD. — An Armored Unknown Man. — Museum of Moravia, Brno (Skutezki foundation).

This refers to Basile Loukitch Dolgorouki, Ambassador Extraordinary of Peter the Great, who was then leaving Paris after a sojourn of two years. His portrait by Rigaud is perhaps the one which was engraved in the XIX century by Afonasiëff.

Count Philippe Louis Sinzendorf (*Suizindorff* or *Lintendorf*), chancellor of the Empire and one of the Austrian "patrons of French art," who had his castle of Zidlochovice (Seelowitz), in Moravia, built from the plans of Robert de Cotte and whose portrait by Largillierre belongs to the Museum of Darmstadt,⁸ also had his portrait painted twice by Rigaud — the first time, with his wife, during his Ambassadorship in Paris

in 1701. Seven copies of this portrait, engraved by Picard in 1713, were delivered to him, the last one in 1728.

The next year, the chancellor sat again for Rigaud in a new pose "*en habit de cérémonie de Chevalier de la Toison d'Or*" (in the official ceremonial garments of a Knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece). The luxury of being portrayed in an attire until then unknown to the practitioners of the studio, cost the sitter three thousand pounds. Incidentally, the same sum had to be paid several years later, by the Marquis de Gueydan for his fancy of being immortalized in the costume of a peruked shepherd. A beautiful print by Drevet helped us to identify this second portrait of Sinzendorf in the Collection of Mr. Adam Tarnowski, Minister

8. GEORGES PASCAL, *Largillierre*, Paris, Les Beaux-Arts, s.d., (*Catalogue*, N° 128); L. RÉAU, *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

of Poland in Sofia in 1939. That copy was only a bust portrait. The original, which was three-quarter length and of broader treatment, must have met with great success in Austria. At least we know that Count François Leopold de Lonqueval de Bucquoy had all the details of Sinzendorf's formal portrait faithfully reproduced in his own portrait which, before World War II, was at his family's Palace in Prague, at the time occupied by the French Legation.

Toward the end of his life, in 1740, Rigaud had as client, another Ambassador of Austria, Prince Joseph Venceslas von Liechtenstein. Of him, Rigaud painted one large portrait "*aux genoux avec habillement copié d'après celui du Duc d'Antin*" (three-quarter length in a costume copied from that of the Duc d'Antin), and one small full-length portrait in which he wears a "*entièrement original*" (completely original) mantle of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The latter portrait is part of the collections of the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna. We also noticed quite a large copy of this portrait at Valtice (Feldsberg) — one of the Moravian estates belonging to the family of the Liechtenstein Princes.

It is known that the *Livre de Raison* is very far from giving the complete repertory of Rigaud's oeuvre. One should therefore not consider as incredible the tale told by Staehlin and quoted by Mr. L. Réau, according to which Rigaud would have painted for the Regent a portrait of Peter the Great while he was visiting France in 1717. We found in another XVIII Century source — the chronicler Golikov — mention of Rigaud as having represented the Tsar "*aux genoux, grandeur naturelle, en uniforme vert de sa garde*" ("three-quarter length, of natural size, in the green uniform of his guard").⁹ Would this be the same portrait which Henriquez engraved "after Rigaud" in St. Petersburg in 1773? The portraits of Peter the Great which were before the Russian Revolution to be found in the building of the *Corps des Cadets* (Cadet Corps) at Poltawa, and at the castle of Tsarskoïe Selo, were, rather uncertainly, also attributed to Rigaud even though Rovinsky expressed the opinion that the origin of the Tsarskoïe Selo portrait is more likely traceable to a portrait by Moor.

To close this discussion of the iconography of the Slav chapter in the art of the painter of Louis XIV, we also wish to mention two portraits of Polish ladies, in connection with which Rigaud's name was mentioned. One is the *Portrait of Countess Bielenska and her Daughter*, in the Collection of the Marquis de Bezonsval in Paris. Mr. J. Roman ranged it among "uncertain attributions."

The other is the *Portrait of Catherine Opalinska*, which before 1939 was to be found in the Novák Collection in Prague and was published by Pierre de Nolhac under its traditional attribution to Rigaud. In our opinion, however, it should rather be identified with the portrait of the mother of Marie Leczinska

9. B. LOSSKY, *Le Séjour de Pierre le Grand en France*, in: "Le Monde Slave," August 1932, p. 291.

painted at Wissemburg by Pierre Gobert in 1725.¹⁰

* * *

No less deserving of mention are several portraits of French personages painted by Rigaud and which various contingencies have brought to the Slavic countries.

When ordering his portraits from the French artist, Ambassador Matveieff also wanted to secure for his collection the portrait of Marie d'Orléans, Duchesse de Nemours, and Sinzendorf wished to have that of Cardinal Armand Gaston de Rohan.

There probably are more copies of the portrait of the Bishop of Strasbourg to be found in the Castle of Sychrov in Bohemia,¹¹ where the Princes of Rohan established their gallery which they recovered after the Restoration and from which also came the *Portrait of Catherine Opalinska*, of the Novák Collection, referred to before. In the same gallery there is likewise a sketch of a man's head attributed to Rigaud, acquired from O. Meier in Barcelona in 1904.

A large and brilliant portrait of an artist or writer, which we have not yet succeeded in identifying, has passed from the Slovak castles of the Counts Pálffy to the Municipal Museum of Bratislava where it still was just prior to the war. And there also appeared at the sale of the Pálffy Collection a portrait which we are reluctant to attribute to Rigaud in spite of the inscription on the back of the canvas, and the signature: *il conte Giulio Visconti Arese duc Re di Napoli Hyac. Rigaud pinx. 1728*.¹²

In regard to Rigaud's portraits in the Russian collections, we learn from Mr. L. Réau that Count Rostopchine, the father of Madame de Ségur, had five portraits by Rigaud in his Gallery which was formed in Paris from 1818 to 1823: "The Chancellors d'Aguesseau and de Séguier, the architect Perrault, Rollin and an Unknown Man."

A *Portrait of the Marquis de Gueydan* (*Livre de Raison*, 1735) — replica of the one in the Museum of Aix-en-Provence — belonged to the Miatlev family in St. Petersburg.

Among the collections of the Hermitage Museum were to be found the original of the *Portrait of Mademoiselle Louis de Lamet*, signed and dated 1696 (corresponding perfectly to the *Livre de Raison*) and a *Portrait of Fénelon* acquired in Paris in 1811 through Vivant Denon — a replica of the one in the Montpellier

10. P. DE NOLHAC, *Louis XV et Marie Leczinska*, Paris, 1900, pl. III; B. LOSSKY, *Un Portrait de Catherine Opalinska à Prague*, in: "Archives Alsaciennes."

11. "Soupis Pamatek," XXXII (*Repertorium*, by SIMAK).

12. Piestany Pálffy Sale, 1924, (N°86 of the catalogue). Comes from the Kralova Castle (N°51 of the catalogue); cf. FEIGL, *Exposition de Portraits à Prague*, Umeni, III, p. 65.

Museum. This canvas has since been given to the Moscow Museum of Fine Arts. The Roumiantsev Gallery of the same city preserved a *Portrait of the Duc de Broglie* by Rigaud.

In Poland, at the Warsaw Museum, there is, or was, a *Portrait of the Duchesse d'Antin*. At the Stanislas Auguste Gallery, where we have already mentioned a *Portrait of Oginski*, there was also the effigy of the *Marshal de Montmorency Luxembourg*. Mr. Adam Tarnowski, owner of the *Portrait of Sinzendorf*, identified the Marshal's portrait in a painting which he acquired in 1924 in Moscow, at a sale of works of art coming from Russian museums (Fig. 3). The painted number — 2174, 35 — (a later addition) and the measurements of the canvas, indeed correspond to the details given in the inventories of the pictures belonging to the King of Poland.¹³ It was in 1733 that Rigaud painted the Marshal's portrait — three-quarter length, front view, clad in armor, with a battle scene in the background — as we know it from a print by C. Vermeulen. A print by Rouillet shows the same face but there the warrior's bust alone is represented, framed by a scroll molding with trophies, designed by Parrocel. The cuirass and the other details of his attire are different, but correspond exactly to the portrait in the Tarnowski Collection, the excellent treatment of which is suggested in the reproduction of it appearing in this article.

* * *

Before closing this survey we must call attention to a drawing, formerly in the Skutezki Collection which entered the Moravian Museum at Brno before the war (Fig. 4).¹⁴ It is a brilliant sketch drawn with two pencils on blue paper, and which unquestionably reproduces a portrait by Rigaud: *An Armored Unknown Man* whose features are very much like those of the Duc d'Antin. Might this not be one of the loose sheets of the lost *Livre de Vérité* mentioned by J. Roman, in which the copyists Vienot and Montmorency made copies of the most beautiful portraits painted by Rigaud, and the discovery of which would be of such precious assistance to art historians for future research in the field of Rigaud's art?

BORIS LOSSKY.

¹³ 0.64m.; 0.52m.; TH. MANKOWSKI, *Galerja Stan. Augusta*, LWOW, 1932, N°2174 (repr.); L. RÉAU, in: "Archives de l'Art Français," XIII (1932), p. 243.

¹⁴ "Beaux-Arts," November 18, 1938.



THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN ART

DAVID AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF GÉRICAUT'S ART

BAUDELAIRE knew that old art and modern art are not contradictory, but that in every work, both timeless and modern aspects are to be found. "Modernity — that is, the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent — is that half of art of which the other half is the eternal and the immutable. There is a modernity for every ancient painter."¹ From the Renaissance to the French Revolution, nearly every generation of European art has almost unconsciously been able to find a new balance between the two component elements; here the tradition of one school and one country bequeathing to the next, there a continually renewed inspiration leading repeatedly to the discovery of new overtones.

Every work of art of that period shows how universally valid cultural values are when *organically* united with originality of painting. Structure and form, imagi-

1. *Oeuvres*, Pléiade ed., II, 335.

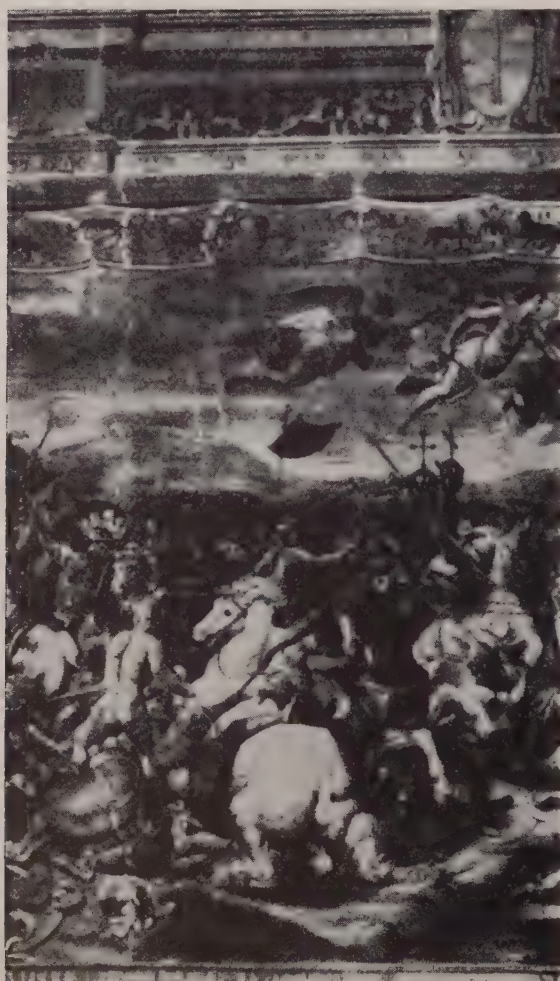


FIG. 1. — SCHOOL OF RAPHAEL. — Battle of Constantine, fresco. — Vatican (Detail with the rearing horse). Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

nation and vision, design and color, light and tone, composition and detail, seem to combine ever anew into a unity and thus create a genuine artistic value. How fundamentally was the situation altered with the advent of the first modern of the XIX Century! The elements of which a work of art is composed naturally remained the same, but it seemed to become tremendously more difficult and complicated to integrate them into a whole. More factors came into play, and instead of complementing, they fought one another and stood in the way of perfection. There were not only the complex problems of *formal* technique; the artist's themes and content made their demands as well. To set a nude female figure in a landscape was for Giorgione the obvious proceeding. When Manet took his inspiration from Giorgione for his *Lunch on the Grass*, such a storm was loosed about the theme that because of it the new way of painting was long overlooked.

The recurrent crises over romanticism, realism, or impressionism in painting resembled political skirmishes. Before anyone could acquire cachet as an

"artist," he had to declare his partisanship — whether he stood with Ingres or with Delacroix or with Courbet. For many years it seemed as though the prime artistic criterion was not "good or bad" but "neoclassic or romantic or realistic."

There was not one art of painting; there were two or three which were mutually exclusive and which set up their own standards.

Besides the stylistic difficulties which had to be overcome in order to paint a picture, modern times brought with them a new difficulty and a great one, which extended beyond art; one had first to declare one's political allegiance or at least give expression to a world view. Here again Baudelaire furnishes the explanation. In his review of romantic painting, 1846, he says: "Romanticism does not consist precisely either in the choice of subjects or in exact truth, but in THE MODE OF FEELING ... Thus it is necessary first of all to know the aspects of nature and the situations of

man, which the artists of the past either scorned or ignored."² That holds true not only for Romanticism in the narrower sense but also for the whole of modern art. Baudelaire's next sentence reads: "He who says romanticism, says modern art."²

If one asks WHY the modern artist had to concern himself with so many matters outside the artistic sphere, why he had to take his stand before he began to paint, one needs to bear in mind the fundamental change in background which the French Revolution had brought about. Before the Revolution, art patrons — men of ability and culture — had had the greatest stakes in the world of art. They had prescribed a particular theme for a particular purpose, and had given definite commissions; their imagination had worked on the artistic plane. The values realized in art had conformed to the verdict of the social elite. The ideals of the time were not merely incorporated in the esthetic world, but society actually used art as its organ of expression.

With the breakdown of the *ancien régime*, the artist became emancipated from his patron. He produced freely; he could follow his own imagination, his personal ideas, and develop his individual initiative. In place of collaboration between patron and artist, there began competition among works of art; the urge to distinguish oneself by original discoveries along thematic or stylistic lines played a great role. Works of art were created for their own sake in isolated studios. Every individual artist had to build a bridge to the market of the capital, to the life and vision of the epoch; he had to know how to interest pos-



FIG. 2. — GÉRICAULT. — Cavalry Officer on Horseback. — Louvre, Paris. Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

2. *Ibid.*, II, 66.

sible customers in a new way; he had to give to men and nature a "modern" interpretation. The formal aspect of the "eternal" values in the old art had embodied the social, spiritual, and moral structure of that world. The modern bourgeois world, with its one-sided emphasis upon material production, exiled art. Art became the rallying ground for the opposition, keeping watch over the threatened spiritual values. The natural separation of art from a more and more industrially organized society on the one hand, and the increased struggle for artistic self-assertion on the other, necessarily provided a great impetus for modernity — in Baudelaire's sense. The altered aspect of experienced reality penetrated to the core of art and there presented itself as a problem.

That became evident even in the days of the French Revolution itself. The place of Louis David in art and at the same time in political events was no accident. With the disappearance of the "privileged classes," the kind of art they had loved and patronized was also fated to disappear. In those stormy times, it was but a small step from the condemnation of the rococo style favored by the "parasites" of society and of the values on which it had been based, to the condemnation of all art as parasitic, reactionary, or devoid of purpose. David saw the danger of this, and from the resources of his full personality he did more than create a new kind of



FIG. 3. — GIULIO ROMANO. — Study of Horses, drawing. — Albertina, Vienna.

vision, derived from the long European classical tradition. He used the traditional antique mythology to make "modern" art into an ally of the Republic's statesmen; in other words, he opened for art the window of contemporary reality, and let it have a stake in the moral and spiritual values of the revolutionary awakening.

Anyone who reads the reports and protocols of

those times will realize how effective the *Oath of the Horatii*, the *Death of Socrates*, and *Brutus* must have been, and how in them, with his plastic, tactile mode of vision, David was able to present actual BEING, in contrast to the picturesque shimmer of, say, a rococo park in the preceding generation which, though actual, had been able to give only an illusory APPEARANCE.

Although the modernity of David's style is less strongly felt today than at its first appearance, especially by those who are not French, and although its "eternal"

aspect is now questioned, yet the importance of the historical turning point it marked should not be overlooked. The problems art had to face because of the French Revolution are responsible for the characteristics of painting up to our own day.

Unless we understand David's key position, the stylistic development in the century following him must seem to us like the meaningless accumulation of the most disparate pictorial ideas.³

Indeed, unless we have a clear insight into certain fundamental concepts, it would even be difficult to perceive unity in the creations of David himself. In his "historical" pictures, did he not simply fall back upon archeology and open the door to a lifeless academicism? In his pictures pertaining to the Revolution, did he not reveal a brutal naturalism of the sort seen in the *Marat*, and ultimately, in the portraits, leave room for a bland realism?

Popular as they are, such questions — based on subject-matter — remain entirely on the periphery of the problem. For the differences in style between the contemporary of the Revolution and his "models" in Antiquity and in the Renaissance, are greater by far than the similarities.

As an artist, David was a powerful figure, though of a single-minded and definitely limited nature. To develop the plastic, tactile contours of his manner of painting, and thereby to found a new European school, was the goal to which he subordinated all else. He wanted to bring his century back to nature as he understood it, and every deliberation and decision in his active life served this single principle; to it he devoted his will-power under a self-imposed limitation. He saw quite clearly that his goal could be realized only by very special exertion, not by mere further organic development of "old-regime" tendencies. In his youth he had



FIG. 4. — GÉRICAULT. — Battle Scene, painting after Giulio Romano. — Zinser Collection, New York.

3. See: WALDEMAR GEORGE, *Le Dessin Français de David à Cézanne*, Paris, 1929.

been faced with two totally different kinds of painting: the warmth and blooming richness of Fragonard's palette, and the academic dryness of Vien. He turned to the latter, because he saw beneath the dusty surface the chance to revise the picturesque vision of Fragonard, and because he welcomed every promise of help in breaking through the long Baroque-Rococo development. David was primarily a destroyer, because he had to open the road to something new. This something new was at first glance not easy to recognize; when it was visible at all, it seemed to be wrapped in the garments of the old Academicism. Was it, then, something new in western history to respect and imitate Antiquity?

Indeed, imitation of Antiquity as such was not the new element which differentiated David from his predecessor Vien. Inspiration from Antiquity was for him not the end, but one means among others. Many of David's early pictures — and an occasional one from his later periods — may betray an archeological "mimicry" and resemble the productions of the academists in composition, if not in quality; but his work as a whole has completely broken away from them. Even in the choice of his material motifs he came to abandon "antique" themes for the monumental representation of the present, with such figures as *Marat*, *Lepelletier*, *La Marraichère*, *Napoleon*. Only when the turn of events in the Revolution silenced him, did he again employ antique subject-matter, as a sort of allegorical cryptography.

His style, no doubt, shows traces of many influences. One can readily point out one of his figures and recognize in it an antique statue, in another figure find Raphael, or in a third the manner of Caravaggio. But is David for that reason an eclectic without character? Does he let himself be drawn hither and yon by his sources of inspiration so that at last he gives up any style of his own?

The answer is precisely the opposite. In his character as an artist David never vacillated for a second. Because he had his goal clearly in mind from the very beginning, he could afford to be less scrupulous than others in his choice of means. With a primitive's freedom from inhibition — as Waldemar George has justly said — he broke through continuity in art and placed on the agenda the re-envisioning of all artistic values.

This attitude is what is decisive — not any judgment as to the rightness or wrongness of his theory and practice about the supremacy of plastic representation over color. That theory and that practice were almost certainly wrong, but the "spirit of inquiry and criticism" which David brought to the development of his art was certainly the beginning of a new epoch — the modern epoch. Only such an attitude has made it possible to bring up anew in every generation the basic problems of style, and to usher in Romanticism, Realism, and Impressionism. It is precisely this which Baudelaire calls knowing "the aspects of nature and the situations of man."

Another quality which places David at the peak of the XIX Century is the liberality with which he could borrow figures, groups, and whole motifs from older



FIG. 5. — GÉRICAULT. — Wild Horse Race. — Louvre, Paris. Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

art, without becoming eclectic. Since we have become aware of the "influence" of Raphael, Giorgione, Velasquez, and Goya upon Manet, of Poussin and Greco upon Cézanne, of Raphael upon Ingres — to mention only a few examples from hundreds — we have better understood that freedom from "influences" is no measure of artistic quality, especially in the XIX Century.

The modern element in art is to be found when sensations and reactions to the modern world enter into the artistic imagination, and when, with the aid of "old" art methods, a new vision emerges. In the XIX Century, a vital art was created by the amalgamation of heterogeneous formal elements. To express it heretically: the more living, the more contemporary, the newer art tried to be, the more impure it was in terms of the eternal values; and the more it clung to the purity of esthetic values, the less alive it necessarily became. At the beginning, David illustrated both truths. His beautifully composed pictures, especially from the post-revolutionary period, like the *Sabine Women*, *Sappho*, or *Leonidas*, leave us ice-cold, but his less formal portraits reveal the great artist that he was.

Although it is fashionable today to overlook the significance of David, he remains, historically considered, the founder of modern art. And whether we like him or not, whether he committed artistic mistakes or not, we must understand his

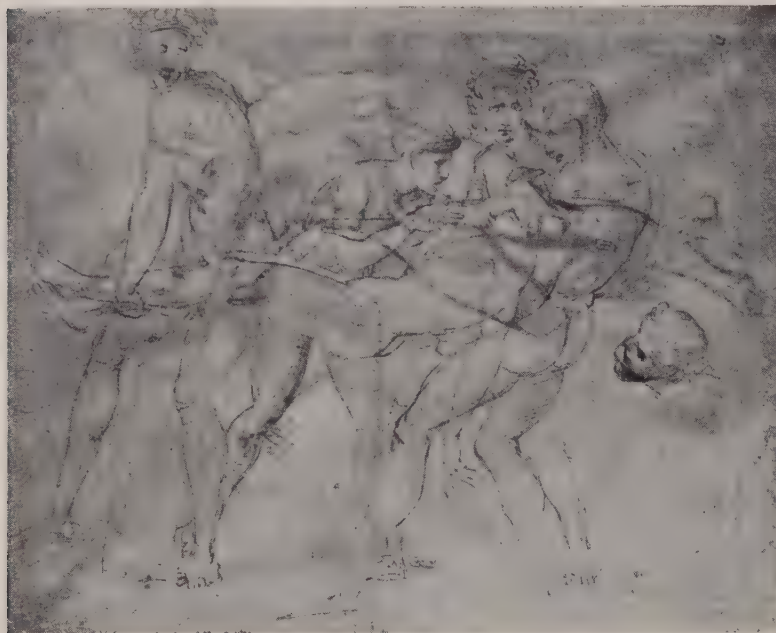


FIG. 6. — RAPHAEL. — Death of Adonis, drawing. — Albertina, Vienna.

role. No artistic undertaking, up to the middle of the XIX Century and beyond, can be rightly judged apart from its relation to his work.

Géricault understood David better than did David's own pupils. During his most "anti-classic" period, Géricault interrupted his stay in England to visit the exile in Belgium and pay his respects. We do not know what the two liberals discussed, but it is an enticing supposition that Géricault might

have described how much he had been helped to discover the import of modernism by strictness of form and integrity of drawing and by the lessons of the old masters, and how, following in the footsteps of David, he, too, had won freedom — his own freedom.

The drawings naturally show much more clearly than do the paintings that Géricault was firmly anchored to the world of the old masters. Drawings, by their very nature, remain nearer their first inspiration than do paintings; many ideas, of course, find their only expression in drawings and are never developed into great compositions.

Especially in the studies drawn during his Italian period, may we note what a dominating role "classic" art played in his imagination. Every



FIG. 7. — GÉRICAULT. — Fualdès Being Carried to the River. — Formerly Duc de Trévise Collection, Paris.

figure, every motif, every "discovery" of Raphael or Michelangelo was to him valuable and worth studying.

Not only did the great frescoes and murals hold his attention, but so also did drawings which he got to know through contemporary engravings. Giulio Romano and Marcantonio and every lesser artist who had worked in the circle of the masters, was interesting to him. In this respect Géricault differed not at all from the artists of the preceding centuries.

He differed from them, rather, in respect to intention. The classical motifs were for him not to be accepted as dogmas beyond all discussion, but to be freely chosen as valuable aids to artistic perfection. To see with the eyes of the masters meant to him to see more largely. Furthermore, he had other sources of inspiration besides the old masters: his own observation, the happenings around him, and the works of all ages and peoples which in his youth he had studied in the Louvre and some of which he had copied.

He turned upon the classics his "spirit of inquiry and criticism." It gave him artistic satisfaction and assurance in self-control to arrive at results which, far from contradicting the classical values of balance and harmony in drawing, reaffirmed their validity. The idea from the Raphael-school *Battle of Constantine* (Fig. 1) for the horse in the *Cavalry Officer on Horseback* (Fig. 2), the inspiration from Giulio Romano (Fig. 3) in the *Wild Horse Race* (Fig. 5) and in the *Battle Scene* (Fig. 4), the motifs from Raphael (Fig. 6) in the *Fuadès* drawings (Fig. 7), and many other "borrowings" by no means constituted for him a confession of any lack of artistic independence; rather they constituted triumphs, which proved to him that in spite of many bold innovations in subject-matter and in vision, he was still in line with the great tradition in art.

Only against the "classical" background which finds expression in drawings, can the modern in Géricault be understood and appreciated.



FIG. 8. — GÉRICAULT. — Study of a Horse, painting after Rubens. — Leon Michelson Collection, New York.

* * *

With respect to his generation, Géricault belongs to the end of the period of Neoclassical painting of France; he was eleven years younger than Ingres, and his life came to a close even before the death of Louis David. The attempt has often been made to claim him for the Romantic school, but he died before the official beginning of this movement in the visual art of France — the Paris Salon of 1824. He might be considered a contemporary of the Romanticists but only from the perspective of England and Germany; both these countries showed throughout their art and literature an earlier and stronger tendency toward romantic values than did France. But the decision as to whether an artist is classic or romantic is not arrived at from his belonging to a certain generation or even from his choice of subject matter, but from his formal manner of representation.

Theodore Géricault was born in Rouen on September 26, 1791, during the French Revolution. His family soon moved to Paris, where he spent his childhood and youth. At the age of ten, he lost his mother and was put into a boarding-school. To what extent the loneliness and shyness of his character can be explained by this, must be decided by psychologists. His father's position as a well-to-do lawyer later enabled him to lead an independent life for many years.

Long before he left the *lycée* (high-school), all his aspirations were symbolized by two names: Franconi and Rubens. The former, a famous circus rider, typified the ideal of the boy, who was passionately fond of horses all his life. When he spent his vacations in Normandy he used to ride the wildest horses; in the outskirts of Paris he followed the carriages out to the race track; he spent his evenings at the circus. Even as a schoolboy he already had his own horse.

His interest in the other name, Rubens, indicates his admiration for painting, which was not much less strong than his admiration for horses (Fig. 8). The Louvre was in those years the center for works of art from all Europe, which had been accumulated there during the military successes of the French army. Never before or since has a museum assembled so many masterpieces from all ages and nations under one roof. The young Géricault learned there that the art works of different ages can all be equally alive. He began very early to copy — or, more precisely, to interpret in his own way — works of a classical nature, but he felt himself equally drawn by the vital temperament of the Flemish master — a taste somewhat unusual in his generation.

The decision to become a painter was not difficult for him, and the choice of a teacher was still easier: Carle Vernet as a painter of horses seemed to combine in one person the two ideals of the seventeen-year-old. But soon after going to him, the lad was forced to admit that he was not in the right place. Although the weak and far too decorative manner in which Vernet represented his elegant horses might delight a circle of connoisseurs, it was certainly not in the least capable of helping



FIG. 9. — HORACE VERNET. — The Studio (*L'Atelier*). — Louvre, Paris.

a beginner in the painter's art to realize his own self-expression. The most positive outcome of his months with Vernet was the intimate friendship with the latter's son Horace which began then and was later to be so important for him.

Géricault owes much more to his second teacher, Pierre Guérin, in whose studio he spent the winter of 1810-1811. As an artist, the painter of *Phaedra and Hippolytus*, *Andromache*, and *Pyrrhus*, represented only the benumbing of classical principles and their deterioration into lifeless academicism. A mediocre painter and yet a good teacher, he understood how to bring his pupils nearer to what is teachable in art: self-discipline and methodical study. The formula by which he manufactured his own compositions he evidently kept to himself. For the rest, he left the responsibility to his students' own initiative. Thus there could be found in his studio many young people who were to become the leaders of the romantic revolt; seven years later Delacroix was to begin in the same milieu. If Géricault learned no more here than a sense for solid drawing, for line and outline, he got what was for him the best training he could possibly find.

To develop color and motion, he sought his own way by studying in the museums

the masters who appealed to him. Among the thirty-two paintings which he copied for himself, listed by Clément,⁴ those of Rubens and Titian are in first place. But he also copied Caravaggio, Poussin, Salvator Rosa, Velasquez, Rembrandt, and Van Dyck — a roster which shows that his interest in painting problems was not limited to a single school or country.

Géricault was, in effect, the first of the XIX Century painters to rediscover the world of the baroque. To be sure, Baron Gros had already cast his eye upon Rubens and broken through the tight net of David's rules. But no new unity had come out of that. In his paintings, one might without ill effect move any group a little sideways, forwards, or backwards. Géricault was warned by his treatment rather than induced to follow it. He sought color, movement, and spontaneous invention, but he never played them off against form and firm structure. His baroque vision is a continuation of David's principles of construction, not, like Gros's, a rejection of them.

Certain parallels between Baroque and Romantic art have long since been recognized, and romantic traits are apparent in Géricault's style. But was he therefore a pacemaker for Romanticism, as Delacroix was the first to believe? He certainly anticipated much of what was to come, before any romanticism in painting was spoken of. It is easy to see whence his inspiration came. In the literary movement of the time — in Chateaubriand, Lord Byron, Madame de Staël, and Walter Scott — he could perceive new undertones which suggested a significance for color. To be sure, in his choice of subject-matter he was never concerned with a flight to the past. Color lay for him in the impressions which he received from the world about him and which he strove to integrate into a firm structure.

His first painting, which created a stir in the Salon of 1812, throws light on his method of creation. The story goes that he one day saw a rearing runaway horse hitched to a wagon, on the road to St. Cloud. After this brief glimpse, but also after studying an engraving of the *Battle of Constantine* — a fresco of the school of Raphael (Fig. 1) — he produced the *Cavalry Officer on Horseback* (Fig. 2), a work in which his contemporaries admired the return of Rubens' fire in a modern form.

The next painting he exhibited was the *Wounded Cuirassier*, a symbol of the times. "Again it was the events which provided his subject," remarks Clément, for the date was 1814, the year of Napoleon's crisis. The combination of firm outlines, perhaps somewhat stiff rhythmical arrangement, relief-like simplification, and rich modeling of tones, show that the artist was already following his own path. Lack of success with the critics and, still more, his own sense of the unsatisfactory quality of this work, made Géricault decide for a time to give up art. He joined the Bourbon musketeers and fled from artistic problems into the atmosphere of uniforms and horses. The awakening, however, came sooner than could have been foreseen. After

4. CHARLES CLÉMENT, *Géricault*, Paris, 1864. (First published in the form of articles in the "Gazette des Beaux-Arts.")



FIG. 10. — GÉRICAUT. — The Raft of the Medusa. — Louvre, Paris (Detail with upper right part).

Montmartre. A large circle of exuberant young people gathered here under the aegis of literature, art, and politics. What bound them together was the desire to escape from the desert of the Bourbon Restoration period; from the atmosphere of narrowing ideas in France — or, to put it positively, the desire to create a cultural liberalism.

"The *Memoirs of Bro*," writes Régamey,⁵ "give us an even livelier idea of Vernet's studio than the amusing picture [Fig. 9] in which the painter shows himself fencing in the presence of a horse, a bulldog, an ape, his pupils Montfort and Lehoux in boxing costume, Eugène Lami playing a trumpet, Amédée de Beauplan strumming on a piano, another friend beating a large drum, and numerous people chattering. A person entering the scene of this hubbub might have had a monkey alight on his head; crossing the studio uncautiously, he might have awakened the bear sleeping near the stove or disturbed the wolf which Vernet was using in depicting the tragic adventure of Mazeppa . . . To be seen occasionally at his place were the Duke of Orleans, whom they called the 'Duke of Valmy', General Foy, General Lamarque, Manuel, Béranger . . ."

Géricault produced little during this period. He was tormented by a great

a few months, still during the "Hundred Days," he obtained a military discharge and remorsefully returned to the world of the studios — remorsefully in every sense. Afterwards he never liked to be reminded of his reactionary aberration, for his experiences had made him a decided liberal.

The following year was the gayest in his short life. The elegant twenty-five-year-old appeared in Paris society and created a stir. The principal stage was the studio of his old friend Horace Vernet, next to his own in the Rue des Martyres, in the heart of

5. RAYMOND RÉGAMEY, *Géricault*, Paris, 1926.

and passionate love for the wife of one of his friends — discretion about whose name has been maintained by all who knew it. He tore himself away; he left France.

Had he been the romanticist he was supposed to have been, he would never have thought of going to Italy to study painting. But actually he planned a two-years' residence in the land of classic tradition. In Florence first, and then even more in Rome, it was Michelangelo who attracted him, whom he studied and copied and through whose eyes he strove to look upon the world. Acquaintance with Michelangelo in Italy was for Géricault the artistic turning-point of his life. In him he recognized the model who had realized the synthesis between the two conflicting faculties: sensibility and reason, passion and the will to create form.

From this point he found his way on the one hand to Raphael and on the other to the eclectic Bolognese, the baroque classicists, and recognized, more from instinct than from historical study of art that he shared with them, one of his own analogous stylistic preoccupations: the attempt to achieve not the antithesis but the synthesis of color and movement with plastic form. He must have studied the drawings — even today so little appreciated — of Annibale Carracci and his circle, through engravings; he probably also got to know the contemporary sculpture of Canova.

In his own drawings of his Roman period he developed a richness of movement through rhythmic unification, flat relief effects, and heraldic decorations — elements which remained characteristic of him. He studied ancient statues and learned through them to understand the nude human body and the anatomy of the horse. He learned what it means to construct a picture, to give plastic arrangement to figures, groups, and scenes. He systematically repressed all concern with color, so that to a friend he could make the observation: "The darker a picture is, the better."

Apart from a few letters, we have little information about Géricault's life in Italy, except that "this heart too full of memories" often felt lonely. But we can guess how it impressed him, for the Italy of those years has been very vividly described in various works of Stendhal, as it could have been experienced by anyone "born delicate and sensual, curious of passion and loving the arts." *Rome, Naples, et Florence* and the *Promenades dans Rome* were conceived almost at this very time. In social background, generation, and temperament, and in political, artistic, and even emotional experiences, the French author might almost be considered Géricault's spiritual brother. Both had passion, energy, character, and strict form. For both, Italy was a personal challenge, and in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the painter might have agreed with the writer that: "In Italy, one should stand on one's own feet; one can no longer lean upon others."

No other of Géricault's works is so revealing of his synthetic method of creation as the *Wild Horse Race* (Fig. 5). He planned this in Rome as a monumental painting of more than life size; he gave the theme varied treatments in more than thirty sketches and studies, but he never completed the painting. The original scene, a



FIG. 11. — GÉRICAULT. — The Derby at Epsom. — Louvre, Paris. *Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.*

race of wild horses through the streets of the city, is the famous high point of the carnival celebration described by Goethe and later by Alexandre Dumas père, and painted by Vernet father and Vernet son. Out of the original true-to-life design, Géricault ultimately developed the decorative rhythm and the inner greatness of form which the composition in the Louvre suggests. Looking at these monumental fragments, we understand what Italy alone could have given him — the breakthrough from classicism and the baroque to the genuine classic. It is not by accident that we are reminded of the metopes on antique temples. We see here, too, his conception of freedom of form, his advance beyond the natural impression to bold construction.

Géricault ended his stay in Italy in September 1817, earlier than he had intended — after a year — and returned to be again in the atmosphere of Horace Vernet, and still more, to be with his beloved. Although she had borne him a son, his life was irreparably torn by the hopelessness of this love affair. He broke with the world of pleasure; he had his hair cut — the reddish-blond hair he had kept so carefully. During the next long and melancholy two years, he occupied himself with studies of animals in the Jardin des Plantes and with his first lithographs.

Then came the painting freighted with the highest ambitions, and which served to bring him into the limelight as a political opponent of the reactionary régime — *The Raft of the Medusa* (Fig. 10). As a work of art, however, it posed too many problems and provided too few satisfying solutions. Too much conscious or unconscious sensationalism overshadowed the only half-successful artistic experiment. The points of attack were on many planes. There was the story of the incompetent captain of the "Medusa," a former *émigré*, who had obtained his position through graft, and who, after the shipwreck, left a hundred forty-nine people to their fate on a raft amid the waves. That was the prosaic fact that provided the grounds for the accusation by the liberal opposition against the government. Géricault decided to portray the fifteen survivors in an exhausted or dying condition, a scene of grandiose poetry,



FIG. 12. — GÉRICAULT. — *The Paralytic Woman*, lithograph.

to be sure, but somewhat hackneyed in its use of conventional gestures. Then there were the difficulties of composition on a sixteen by twenty-four feet canvas. While the arrangement in three parallel planes indicated timeless greatness to some, the pyramidal structure meant only a relapse into the academic school to others. Géricault himself felt the unfinished quality at the eleventh hour, but nothing better occurred to

him than to introduce still another figure. Géricault's pupil Montfort also felt it when he remarked that the picture "looked like a piece of sculpture in the stage of a first draft."

Even today a visitor to the Louvre feels that a half-finished cartoon has turned up among the paintings. The color seems to play no part at all. Only by climbing on a ladder and inspecting at close range certain well-preserved places at the upper right, can one discover rich-toned, thick brush-strokes, which at a distance unhappily become completely neutralized. In this way one can also discover really inimitable outlines which are unfortunately swallowed up in the general confusion.

But however critical the judgment of the connoisseurs, to the general public of his day the *Raft of the Medusa* was a sensation. What the pamphlet by two of the survivors of the actual wreck, Corréard and Savigny, only half achieved, Géri-



FIG. 13. — GÉRICAULT. — Study of Horses, lithograph from the English period.

cault's painting fully accomplished—it provoked a political scandal. The administration under attack gave him, as a "consolation prize" and as a hint to improve his ideas, a commission for a religious painting. He let it be carried out by his protégé, the twenty-one-year-old Delacroix.

Did he feel that the intellectual boundaries of the reactionary France of

those years were too narrow for him? Did he sense the greater breadth of foreign lands? Or did he, in spite of his return to painting, still retain the idea of giving it up? In the spring of 1820 we find him in England. An entrepreneur agreed to show the *Medusa* throughout that country for the price of admission, a type of enterprise which in those days seems to have been quite common. The anecdotal and political content must have pleased the English public, for the painter received 17,000 gold francs — about \$5,700 today.

The two years he spent in England were of the greatest significance for his work. Furthermore, it is safe to state that they could not have been so influential at any other stage of his development. The case of the *Medusa* shows that the originality of his imagination had given him mastery over modern life; that his power of plastic representation ranged freely over the artistic medium of European tradition; that he was still unsure in his use of color; and that there was still a need for something to integrate the three elements. England gave it to him,



FIG. 14. — GÉRICAULT. — Study of Horses, lithograph (same as the one reproduced as Fig. 13, reworked for the later French edition).

because he was prepared. England did not make Géricault an artist *à l'anglaise*; it made him Géricault.

The distance between Paris and London has never been so great as it was in those days. The Revolution and the Napoleonic War had separated them for a whole generation. Géricault must have felt himself transplanted into another continent and another century — the smoking chimneys of industry, the strong social contrasts, the gray England of the XIX Century. He took lodgings, certainly not for money reasons, with a simple shoemaker; he strolled about, eagerly soaking in the impressions of an unfamiliar world; he made sketches on the streets, at the circus, at burials, on the wharfs, in the slums, in the Battle of Waterloo panorama. He rowed on the Thames, along the meadowy landscapes reminding him of his childhood in Normandy, and soon made friends with jockeys and horses of all breeds.

How much he saw of the great English paintings of the XVIII Century is hard to say. A public museum did not yet exist, and the private collections were difficult of access, especially for a foreigner. W. T. Whitley tells us that at a dinner of the Royal Academy in April, 1821, Géricault met Sir Thomas Lawrence, President of the Academy, and David Wilkie, who in 1822 was to paint the *Chelsea Pensioners Reading the Gazette of the Battle of Waterloo*, the most popular picture yet to be exhibited in the Academy. If we could prove that the Duke of Wellington, who was present at the dinner, invited him to visit his art collection, the otherwise unverifiable connection between Géricault and Goya's works would be established.⁶

His impressions of the English painting of that day can be found in two letters. The first, written shortly after his arrival, is rather reserved and states only: "I have seen some pictures exhibited which cannot but give me confidence. The English school is not really distinguished by accomplishments in landscape, seascape, or genre." It took a year and more for understanding and adaptation before he could write: "The Exposition which has just opened has more fully confirmed my opinion that here alone they know or feel color and effect. You cannot have any idea of the beautiful portraits this year and of the great number of landscapes and genre paintings." He mentions Ward, the young Edwin Landseer, the "touching expressions" of Wilkie; and he was, Théodore Silvestre informs us, quite overwhelmed by Constable, who at that time was anything but beloved by the critics.

English art with its tradition of water colors made Géricault into a colorist, or, to put it better, showed him how he could make use of color without giving up constructive drawing — how he could achieve a synthesis on a higher level. His is not the symphonic color of Rubens with its rich texture of graduated shades, or the melodic color system later developed by the Romanticists, with its dominant motif and complementary accompaniments. His transparent tone is distinct; the pig-

6. For evidence of Goya's influence on Géricault see: Klaus Berger, *Géricault, Drawings and Watercolors*, New York, 1946 (unpublished at the time this article goes to press), pl. 43.



FIG. 15. — GÉRICAUT. — Lion Hunt, aquatint. — Winthrop Bequest, Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Mass.
 Courtesy of the Fogg Museum.

ment has a part to play the strength and direction of each brush stroke is of critical importance. The color is not a medium which covers the whole drawing in the same way; rather it is literally constructive. "The way the color is placed on the canvas is as important as the color itself," as Oprescu⁷ put it. Géricault's achievement can scarcely be over-estimated, for had it been understood by his contemporaries it would have made unnecessary many groping experiments of Romantic painting. Géricault, in his problems if not in his solutions, anticipated Impressionism and even Cézanne.

The representative painting of that period is the *Derby at Epsom* (Fig. 11). With its lucid color tone, the luscious green of the turf and the clouds pregnant with rain, it discloses a new dimension in the work of the thirty-year-old artist: a feeling for atmosphere. Although this "first modern painting," as it has been called, seems to mark a break in the line of his creations without any bridge from the *Medusa*, yet the drawings of this period show a continuity as well as a new departure. The mellow atmosphere has not broken down the strong structure of drawing; it has scarcely softened it. Besides familiar motifs like horse and rider, studies of animals and

7. G. OPRESCU, *Géricault*, Paris, 1927.

portraits, we now find sketches from the life of the great city, which show how much more open and susceptible to images his vision has become; he is now concerned with the modern aspect of life, not merely life as interpreted in the works of Rubens or Michelangelo.

This may be seen still better in the lithographs, which were not intended merely as suggestions and studies but as fully worked out and completed productions. The artist himself tells us that he devoted most of his time in England to them, first, because he hoped to earn a great deal of money with a new and, at that time, very fashionable art-form, and second, because: "I flatter myself that this will be simply an advertisement for me, and that soon the taste of true amateurs who have thus learned to know me will lead them to employ me in work more worthy of me." Both expectations turned out to be false. The *Great English Suite* remained not-understood; not even a plate with the touching caption "Pity the sorrows of a poor old man whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door," or the one entitled *Paralytic Woman* (Fig. 12), made any impression.

If one can make a critical observation, it is certainly not because they are too strict in draftsmanship or too classical, but rather because they are too soft in detail, too English, too sentimental — in short, too "romantic." But it is precisely this suite which makes Géricault so modern, which shows his accuracy in the depiction of the social and political scene, and which shows him in possession of a new artistic quality — a tonal atmosphere in black-and-white. When, two years later, he was going over some of his lithographs for a French edition (Figs. 13 and 14), he himself was — as so often happened — his own critic. As Clément wrote, he directed his fellow workers to "whiten the light parts among the black ones and to reinforce the shadows so as to give more freedom and broadness to the work. The light was too scattered."

Géricault returned to the continent in the spring of 1822, and threw himself furiously into one undertaking after another. Not yet recovered from a slowly healing sciatica, he busied himself with an unfortunate bank speculation and made an equally unfortunate investment in a factory for synthetic stones. He had several horses in his stable and was often in the saddle. He showed himself at races. He inspected his factory. He suffered three riding accidents within a few months. As a result, in February, 1823, he had to be put to bed at a friend's house; in May he felt better and went home. The records show that he visited Delacroix. Then followed a long period of agony. On January 18 of the following year he died, at the age of thirty-two.

Did he have a presentiment that only one more year would be spared to him for creation? It almost seems so, for no other period of his art was so productive and so rich in ideas as his last. He published, with the help of his pupils, seven series of lithographs, including four illustrations for Byron's works; he collaborated with Taylor and Nodier on the *Picturesque Journey in France* — a symbol of victorious



FIG. 16. — GÉRICAUT. — The Kiln (*Le Four à Plâtre*). — Louvre, Paris. Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

romanticism. His sketches show an increased number of lightly painted Oriental pictures. Was he at last taking the road of Romanticism? Who can say, with his exceptional receptivity, how he would have developed in a longer creative period? Actually, however, he was not following Delacroix; rather, his astonishing water color of the *Lion Hunt* (Fig. 15) carried him a whole generation ahead, and not in theme alone.

Two landscapes strike new chords: whereas the *Wreck* is bold in color and movement, the *Kiln* (Fig. 16) has qualities which Cézanne would have known how to appreciate. It is restrained in color, rich in tone, and constructive in drawing as well as in the broadly organized brush strokes.

A series of five studies of the insane, conceived not as illustrations but as independent pictures, gives us a particularly keen sense of the loss of this artist-discoverer. His curiosity and inquisitiveness about the world, his interest in penetrating appearances, his original interpretation, his sense of constructive form, his gift for tonal nuance in color, and his power to unite all these elements, make these five pictures

unique in their century.

Where, then, was Géricault headed? Out of the tradition — or better, traditions — of drawing and out of pictorial experiments, he had created an organ by which to grasp the “modern” aspect of things; to grasp what was special in his century, so full of social tensions. His last ideas concerned plans for monumental representations of such subjects as: the Negro slave trade, opening the doors of the Inquisition, and the murder of Fualdès (Fig. 7). In the last, he drew upon a contemporary event in which the mixture of money interests, political controversies, sexuality, and brutal feeling had produced a tremendous scandal. The sketches which remain do not suffice to give us an idea of how the works would have looked when completed, but they remind us not a little of the sketches he made while he was in Rome.

Here Géricault had come full circle. The Italian lesson had not been forgotten, England still influenced him, everything was absorbed by his all-inclusive vision; and, seeing and understanding, he looked ahead.

KLAUS BERGER.



FIG. 17. — GÉRICAULT. — The Kidnapper. — Gerstle Collection, Forest Hills.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

PHYLLIS ACKERMAN, *Ritual Bronzes of Ancient China*, New York, The Dryden Press, 1945, 144 pp., 66 pls. \$6.00.

In China, when the press releases such a misleading book as PHYLLIS ACKERMAN's recent foray into ritual bronzes, it is customarily ignored in scholarly publications. In the West, however, present day high pressure advertising requires that some notice be taken of such effusions, even when no serious criticism is merited.

The jacket cover states: "This volume gives for the first time a comprehensive, systematic, and intelligible interpretation of the uses of the bronzes, the sacrifices for which they were designed, the ritual gestures to which they were adapted. The meaning of the ornament is made clear with detailed and thoroughly documented explanations both of the immediate symbolism and of the underlying philosophy—an exposition based on the oldest Chinese literary sources, Chinese philosophy, mythology, folklore, and customs." MISS ACKERMAN (MRS. ARTHUR UPHAM POPE) herself modestly admits in her "Postscriptum" that, "Collections of detailed observations cannot add up to insight and rarely transmute into it; . . ." It is apparently with this "insight" that *Ritual Bronzes of Ancient China* is concerned, for the readers will find little factual relationship between the descriptions of the bronzes and the illustrations.

MISS ACKERMAN begins her book by recreating the thought processes by means of which paleolithic and neolithic man evolved their concepts of the cosmos. Her thesis is carried out so convincingly by an *a priori* method, that the reader is led to believe that identical concepts must have been developed under similar conditions all over the world. It is with some surprise that he later reads, "Such numerous, varied, and specific identities could not be coincidence or 'independent parallel invention.'"

But, this is a minor point. The main thesis of the book is that the ritual of Shang and Chou was essentially a phallic ceremony. To prove this the author draws parallels between Near Eastern and Mediterranean cultures in a spate of words that would be extremely convincing were no examination made of the

substance. Indeed, the stylistic method resembles a composite of *Mein Kampf* and Gertrude Stein with overtones of James Joyce. Thus she writes: "The God is human, but the image wavers, for the Power is also in the bull, and things equal to the same thing equal each other—axiom one of early symbolism. So Dionysos is bull-faced, bull-horned, bull-hoofed; is a bull . . . The Power by virtue of resurrection was in the snake. Zagreus is a snake. The Power is in the phallos. The God is ithyphallic, wears the phallos on his brow."

The cult of early China, according to the author, is based on fertility rites, which are predominantly phallic, and on *yin* and *yang* symbolism. (It should be noted that the concept of *yin* and *yang* appears comparatively late in Chinese literature.) The motives on the bronzes used in this cult are therefore interpreted as being symbolic as well as naturalistic representations of sex organs, and MISS ACKERMAN is able to analyze these in great detail. There is no evidence either for or against the writer's contention, based on Near Eastern parallels, that the bull's head in China is a phallic symbol, but the motives, singled out as actual representations of phalli and their female counterparts, are ample evidence of fanciful interpretation.

Reference is made not only to Near Eastern relationships and to specific bronzes, but also to Chinese literature even as late as T'ang. The author indicates awareness of the danger of using questionable texts in order to interpret the culture of Shang and Early Chou by attacking "Western higher criticism" for "disposing summarily of the authenticity of Chinese classical texts." Most of the "higher criticism" that has destroyed the validity of these texts has been done not by Western but by Chinese scholars, although some important studies have also been made by a few Western sinologists, notably HERRLEE GLESSNER CREEL. Nevertheless, were we even willing to accept an uncritical use of Chinese literary sources, we would still be unable to find in them any evidence of phallicism which is regarded by MISS ACKERMAN as a central theme.

The author's most impressive authority is BERNHARD KARLGREN. The stimulating article to which she refers has never been accepted as sound by any important

sinologist, according to this reviewer's knowledge. In passing, it might be said that most of KARLGREN's work on bronzes, although valuable as a repository for material, has little validity in its deductions.

MISS ACKERMAN sees the bronzes covered with numerous phallic representations, both male and female, which she describes in great detail. Where other scholars have found animals, she has been able to find genitalia. Yet it seems strange that not one naturalistic phallus has been found in bronze age China, and that among the oracle bones of Shang the only fertility references are the obvious queries about rain. If China ever passed through a stage of phallic ritual, there is certainly no trace remaining from Shang times.

As an example of the author's interpretation of motives, attention is called to the discussion of the representation on the leg of a *chiu-ting* where, she writes (p. 90), there is a divinity depicted "as bearded and presumably older, and in one instance, the beard is parted in three strands, a rather unusual arrangement seen also on the Great God in Luristan." This would be unusual were it so, but the motive is actually a ram's head above two "vertical" *kuei*, a very common representation.

Again MISS ACKERMAN tells us that the many birds on bronzes usually identified as owls are really pheasants. She emphasizes the phallic character of a particular specie, the horned tragopan of the Yellow River region, which is quoted as having two little horns "these which ordinarily are concealed beneath the feathers of the head are at the moment of display raised, elongated and

slightly distended, appearing well above the head plumage." A well-known bronze in the Art Institute of Chicago is then identified with the tragopan. The horns on this bird were first shown by FLORENCE WATERBURY¹ as belonging not to the bird but to a tiger mask upon the bird's head. MISS WATERBURY's significant discovery is cavalierly ignored in a note to the effect that the bird had been referred to as a dove.

Another example of the author's carelessness, or ignorance of previous publications relating to her subject, is the date of Shang or Early Chou that she ascribes to a square *ting* in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art. This *ting* is one of the few bronzes to which a valuable monograph has been devoted because of its datable inscription.²

Several of her other datings are questionable, but then careful scholarship involved in dating and identifying motives is apparently incompatible with the "insight" necessary to interpret the broader aspects of Chinese ritual bronzes.

In brief, it should be said of the book that no original statement has been substantiated, that the basic theory (phallicism) requires a tortured interpretation of literary and archeological sources, and that many statements are contradicted by available evidence.

MR. ARTHUR UPHAM POPE, in his foreword, warns that the more serious reviews will be reviewed in the bulletin published by the Iranian Institute. This reviewer affirms that his attitude has been extremely serious.

J. LEROY DAVIDSON.



1. *Early Chinese Symbols and Literature; Vestiges and Speculations*, New York, E. Weyhe, 1942, p. 117, pls. 8 and 67. This reviewer added some remarks to this discovery in: "Gazette

des Beaux-Arts," January, 1945, at the time MISS ACKERMAN's book was probably in press.

2. LAURENCE SICKMAN, *Cauldren of King Ch'eng of Chou*, in: "Gazette des Beaux-Arts," March, 1943, pp. 181-2.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

JEAN ADHEMAR, associated since 1932—now as Assistant Curator—with the Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Professor at the Ecole du Louvre and the Université Libre of Brussels, has written, since the publication of his thesis in London during the war, a book on Goya and a series of studies on prints resulting from his work on the Inventories of the modern part of the collections in the Cabinet des Estampes. His article bringing a *Contribution to the History of Art Collections, The Collection of Paintings of Francis I* page 5
is the result of the same line of research.

JEANNE LEJEAUX, graduated from the Ecole du Louvre, Paris, in 1927. Her thesis, *La Place d'Armes de Metz*, published for the Regional School of Architecture of Strasbourg, was awarded the Prost Prize by the Institute of France. Her book, *Sculpture Religieuse* (Paris, 1934) was awarded the Charles Blanc Prize of the French Academy and the Thorlet Prize of the Academy of Fine Arts. She is the author of a chapter of the *Monographie de la Cathédrale de Metz* published under the direction of Mr. Marcel Aubert, member of the Institute of France (1931); of the *Répertoire des Musées de France* published for the Office of Museums of the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1929); and of many articles, particularly on the architect J. F. Blondel, the architect and painter Ch.-L. Clérisseau, etc. She has specialized in the study of Metz and the Lorraine—the region from which her family comes. Her latest contribution to this field of inquiry is her article in this issue: *Charles Poërson, 1609-1667, and the Tapestries of the Life of the Virgin in the Strasbourg Cathedral* page 17

BORIS LOSSKY, a graduate of the Institute of Art and Archeology of the University of Paris and of the Faculty of Letters of the same University, was a pupil—and, later, a disciple—of Henri Focillon and René Schneider, and has specialized in the study of French art in its relation to eastern European—and, particularly, Slavic—countries. His article on *Portraits by Rigaud in the Slavic Countries* page 30
was written in 1939, just before the outbreak of World War II. It brings to light a great deal of unknown material gathered by the author in the course of extensive research on the spot. Most of this was again lost sight of during the war and has perhaps perished forever, which gives particular value to this article.

KLAUS BERGER, was head of the Art Department of the Municipal People's University at Berlin (1927 to 1933); visiting Professor at Lille University (1928); lecturer at the Free German University, Paris (1934-1939), and co-editor of Meyer's *Small Encyclopedia* (1932). Associated with Northwestern University, Chicago, Ill., he left after the end of the war for Biarritz, France, to teach at the U. S. Army University established there. His book on Géricault is scheduled for prompt publication by H. Bittner & Co., New York. In his article on *The Beginnings of Modern Art: David and the Development of Géricault's Art* page 41
appears some of the material to be included in that volume.

BIBLIOGRAPHY in this issue is by Mr. J. LEROY DAVIDSON, Director, Art Program, Division of Cultural Relations, Department of State page 63

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